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Owning the Future

DEMONOLOGY AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF SOVEREIGNTY IN A TIME
OF TERROR

S. JONATHON O'DONNELL

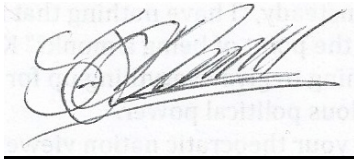
Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

2015

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the relation between demonology and sovereignty in apocalyptic and spiritual warfare discourses in contemporary American evangelical conservatism. Employing a poststructuralist hermeneutical framework drawn from Jacques Derrida and Michel de Certeau, it assesses selected texts published between 2008 and 2013 which construct specific threats to what the authors view as the legitimate telic orders of being, or ‘orthotaxies’. I analyse how these orthotaxies operate as sovereignty claims, positing ownership of the future as temporal, ideological and geopolitical territory within various theopolitics of identity that juxtapose a singular ‘authentic’ self against a multiplicity of others coded as demonic. Orthotaxic sovereignty claims are thus predicated on strategies of (de)legitimation reliant upon demonic others which contest and continually haunt those claims through (an) orthotaxy’s structural dependency on them as self-consolidating others. My thesis focuses on three such demonological others as constructed in thematically-related texts: ‘Islam’, ‘Jezebel’, and ‘Transhumanism’. Each of the case studies traces a distinct relationship between theopolitical sovereignty and its demonic other. Those of ‘Islam’ figure a discourse of competing unity, constructing an uncanny other so (un)like the self which embodies in abject form the order the writers crave. Those of ‘Jezebel’ belie a terror of process, flow and (in)stability that exposes the absence of a stable, singular sovereign. Those of ‘Transhumanism’ reveal a structure of secularised metamorphosis that threatens to rewrite the (in)evitable *telos* of God’s sovereign role in history. By situating these others in the context of a genealogy of the political implementation of demonology and of a reification of American ‘authenticity’ both during and after the Cold War, my thesis explores the structural relationship between theopolitical conceptions of sovereignty and a demonic other which both guarantees and subverts that sovereignty through the mechanisms of its exclusion.

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CONVENTIONS AND ORTHOGRAPHY

This thesis utilises a variant of the Harvard referencing style. All direct quotations are cited within the text using the format (Name Date: Page). When no page is present, as in the case of online sources such as blog entries and newspaper columns, the lack of a page range is indicated by the abbreviation n.p. These texts are included in the Bibliography under the author(s)'s names and include links and access dates. Online sources, predominantly news articles, which are referenced but not quoted are placed in footnotes, with links and dates included, at the relevant junctures. These works are not listed separately under the Bibliography. Classical works, such as *Paradise Lost*, are cited in-text using the convention (Book.Line), but are included in the Bibliography under the author's name and the date of the consulted translation or edition rather than the original publication date.

All Bible verses, unless otherwise marked or included as part of direct quotations, are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV). This version was selected because it was the one most commonly (if not universally) employed by the texts analysed in this thesis. All verses cited in-text follow the convention 'Book Chapter:Verse': for example, Ephesians 6:12. If placed in parentheses, the Book is normally abbreviated: for example, '(Eph. 6:12).'

The Bibliography includes all works, cited and uncited, which have been consulted in the process of writing this thesis. Sources marked 'primary' are works around which the case studies have been oriented and of shared milieu, including spiritual warfare manuals, conspiracist works, and neoconservative reflections. Other works are listed as secondary sources.

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INTRODUCTION

Demonology in a Time of Terror

‘In the panicked aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States,’ write Mark Safford and Peter Kennedy, ‘government officials, politicians, columnists, and other opinion leaders declared the start of a whole new and threatening era facing the nation and indeed the entire world’ (2009: 5). This new era, they elaborate, was declared to be defined by a clash of civilisations between radical Islam, on the one hand, and nations aligned with ‘Western values’ of liberal democracy and the free market on the other. Moreover, this clash would be the glass through which all global discord would be seen (darkly).

Safford and Kennedy gesture here to a certain politico-cultural rhetoric that followed the attacks. Joseph Nye, founder of neoliberal International Relations theory, compared the event to a ‘flash of lightning on a summer evening’, revealing a landscape already transformed by the closing decades of the twentieth century, and of which US analysts and policy makers had remained ignorant (in Morgan 2009: 2). Paraphrasing Jacques Derrida, Giovanna Borradori called the attacks ‘[possibly] the implosive finale of the Cold War, killed by its own convolutions and contradictions’ (2003: 150), while French philosopher Alain Badiou remarked that they had the ‘*fin de siècle* resonance’ of another century (2005: 106) and architectural theorist Benjamin Flowers reflected that, for many, the event ‘heralded the fracturing of a formerly comprehensible world’ (2009: 149). Whether seen as a revelatory moment, the culmination of an old era or origin of a new one, however, ‘9/11’—as it came to be known—has had a lasting cultural, political, religious, legal, and economic impact. The ‘name-date became a slogan’, notes Marc Redfield, ‘a blank little scar around

which nationalist energies could be marshalled' (2009: 1). 9/11 announced the crisis of a nation and (before long) the measures seemingly needed to resolve it. The Global War on Terror (GWOT) it inaugurated has been a—maybe *the*—defining paradigm (political, social, military, philosophical) of the early twenty-first century. A war without conceivable end, waged as a territorial conflict against an enemy unbounded by territory, the GWOT provoked a reconsideration of political ideas of sovereignty, the nation-state, security, and states of exception, and marked the explosive re-entry of an awareness of religion into the public sphere. A decade after Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history and the advent of the millennial kingdom of (neo)liberal democratic capitalism (1992), 9/11 perhaps signalled a form of what liberation theologian Daniel Bell calls 'the refusal to cease suffering' (2001)—a declaration (not always, as here, of catastrophic violence, but perhaps always catastrophic) that others remain outside the kingdom's gates. Or, phrased less (or anti-) apocalyptically, that 'history was not finished with us yet' (Cavanaugh and Scott 2004: 1).

Taking our 'time of terror' as its temporal locus, this thesis is concerned with questions of sovereignty, apocalypse, and, above all, demonology, and the relations that might be shown to run between these 'theologico-political' concepts. This thesis is in conversation with the scholarly corpus, one that has expanded rapidly since 9/11, called political theology. Defined rather too narrowly by William Cavanaugh and Peter Scott as 'the analysis and criticism of political arrangements (including cultural-psychological, social and economic aspects) from the perspective of differing interpretations of God's ways in the world' (*ibid.*), political theology might also be broadly figured as the interrogation of the continued presence, however obscure, of the theological in the political. As Hent de Vries explains, the field names on one hand 'the *scientia* of the elusive and absolute that governs and often unconsciously drives and inspires, or destabilizes and terrorizes, the public domain (the 'theologico-political')', and on the other 'the name and description of the many diverse forms in which this "empty" notion or open dimension can become dogmatically fixated, socially reified, and aesthetically fetishized' (2006: 46). Political theology, as I

employ it here, therefore aims to interrogate both the theological undercurrents that condition the political sphere and the idol- and idealisations of these undercurrents.¹

The undercurrent this thesis explores is, to cite Derrida, the ‘theologeme’ of sovereignty (2004: 110), which he defines as of ‘ontotheological origin, more or less secularized in one place, and purely theological and non-secularized in another’ (2003: 111), and as grounded in a logic of *ipseity*; that is, of sameness, of identity as sameness (2004: 12). However, while this thesis is about sovereignty it is not (only) about the sovereign *qua* sovereign, but about the alterities that frame, constitute, and infiltrate its ipseity. If the sovereign can be seen as the centre of the theopolitics of the *polis*, then this thesis is about those who must wait in the wilderness outside the gates; indeed, whose very presence within the gates would transfigure the inside into outside (city to wilderness, sovereign to Beast), whose *outopia* is figured as the condition of *eutopia*’s possibility. In his seminars on the death penalty, Derrida claims that the state is at its most sovereign, and appeals most to its claims (however disavowed) of universality, when it decrees death, when it condemns and damns, but also when it pardons, when by an imitation of divine grace it lifts that damnation (2014: 3, 138–148). But how does this latter act relate to those structurally denied the possibility of pardon? Those who, in Thomas Aquinas’ words, cannot (or will not) hope for grace, since they ‘sin regarding everything they choose, since the force of their first choice abides in their every choice’ (DM Q16.A5.A/2003: 472)? That is, for those whose first act of dissent and descent reverberates throughout history—those constructed as attempting at every juncture to twist history from its course by force or seduction?

I am speaking here of the constitutive theologico-political figure of the demon, denied any claims to sovereignty but bequeathed just enough autonomy to oppose it. This thesis explores the discursive construction of the demon in relation to the theologeme of sovereignty within contemporary demonologies. It treats this ‘demon’ as a literary/theological figure, not a reality, and ‘demonology’ as a discursive structure—defined, after Michel Foucault, as a set of cultural, linguistic, and

¹ Much contemporary political theology takes point from Carl Schmitt’s 1922 *Political Theology*, specifically his famous dictum that the ‘central concepts of modern state theory are all secularized theological concepts’ (2005: 36). In this thesis, I use ‘theologico-political’ and ‘theopolitical’ to refer to these ‘ontotheological’ structures underwriting modern politics. When I refer to ‘theopolitical sovereignty’ or a ‘theologico-political concept of sovereignty’, I aim to highlight how political sovereignty is a significant element of a Christian theological genealogy.

ideological (and here theological) practices that systematically construct the object(s) of which it speaks (2002 [1989]: 49–51). By adopting a discursive methodology, this thesis aims to analyse, to cite Stuart Hall, the ‘*effects and consequences* of representation...not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities’ (1997: 6). What does it mean, however, to approach the figure of the demon, and the -ology that describes and prescribes it, through a discursive methodology?

In his defence of scholarly engagement with religious demonologies, past and present, Bruce Lincoln defines demonology broadly as ‘an unflinching attempt to name, comprehend, and defend against all that threatens, frightens, and harms us’, one that often encapsulates a variety of rubrics: ‘bacteriology, epidemiology, toxicology, teratology, criminology, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and others’ (2012: 31). Utilising a discursive methodology leads me to concentrate on the effects and consequences of this ‘unflinching attempt’, paying close attention to the (theo)politics of this naming, comprehension of, and defence against, demonological threat. Mastery begins, Jacques Derrida reminds us, with ‘the power of naming, of imposing and legitimating appellations’ (1998: 39). What does it mean to name a demon, and to name *someone* or *something* as demonic? What structures does this naming impose? What potentialities does it attempt to strip, successfully or otherwise? This thesis explores these questions in the context of certain aspects of far-right American Protestantism, the ‘Christian Right’, particularly (if not exclusively) in the form of the eschatological evangelical discourse known as spiritual warfare, a discourse I elaborate below.²

By adopting this discursive methodology, and by juxtaposing the demon to the structures of divine sovereignty, this thesis bears similarities to Sara Ahmed’s recent *Willful Subjects* (2014). In this work, Ahmed builds an archive of the wilful subject as the one constructed as opposing the sovereign will, arguing that the sovereign might

² I would acknowledge here as a UK-based researcher studying America that there is a tendency to displace certain issues across the Atlantic: to gesture to the US’s on-going problems of racial violence and conservative hyper-religiosity as an alibi. This thesis has an American focus because it is there that the demonologies I wanted to study were most concretised, tying closely and overtly into theopolitical discourses of (popular) sovereignty and neo-colonial discursive territorialisation. The European and UK contexts have their own demonologies that hinge on different (if equally theopolitical) structures: the sacredness of a public sphere shorn of real difference and a stringent disavowal of (the continued impact of) its colonial past, to list but two.

be defined as ‘*the right to determine whose wills are the willful wills*’. Sovereign is he who decides on the excluded. Conversely, however, ‘rebellion against tyranny might involve those named as willful renaming the sovereign will as willful will, the sovereign as tyrant’ (2014: 136). The strategy of naming a ruler as in contravention of proper order—as demonic (or) tyrant—has long been a tactic of counter-cultural apocalyptic movements (Horsley 2010; Zamora 1989). There have also been cases of ‘self-demonisation’, however—of adopting the mantle of demonised or demonic in opposition of allegedly sacred order. The most visible of these self-demonisations is found in the literary and intellectual currents of Romantic or symbolic Satanism that sprung from a deliberate misprision—a wilful reading—of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (Craciun 2003; Faxneld 2013a, 2014; Schock 2003). My thesis offers a similar type of counter-reading: it reads the works analysed against themselves, deconstructing their ‘demonologico-political’ constructions of demons in order to excavate their relationships to specific socio-religio-political structures. It explores the discursive structures of demonology as tied by opposition to equally discursive constructions of sovereignty and sovereign will. It attempts what might be called, with an irony characteristic of the Devil, a *political demonology*.

A POLITICAL DEMONOLOGY

As I define it, political demonology engages in political theology via the discursive figure of the demon, and interrogates the concepts that the demon figures: lies (truth), evil (good), sin (virtue), death (life), deviation (normality), and counterfeit (real), to name only the most prevalent. I include the contrasting terms in parentheses since, in many ways, the demon cannot be discursively thought outside of these oppositional relationships; outside its relation of alterity to an ipseity it cannot be. As this thesis explores, however, neither can sovereignty itself be thought outside of these structural oppositions. I might therefore add duality/multiplicity (unity), absence (presence), and other (self). ‘Unity rests in God, duality (*le binaire*) in Satan,’ wrote Huguenot poet Guillaume du Bartas (1544–1590) (in S. Clark 1997: 80). Or, in the words of literary scholar Neil Forsyth, ‘Satan’s name...defines a being who can only be contingent: as

the adversary, he can only be the function of another, not an independent entity' (1989: 4). A political demonology aims to explore these binary oppositions, this inherent, intranscendable condition of contingency, as it manifests in a (post-)secular political present. To appropriate and transform de Vries' words it would be both a '*scientia*' of the binary oppositions listed above as they govern and (consciously or unconsciously) drive and inspire, destabilise and terrorise the public domain (the 'demonologico-political') and also the project of naming and describing the diverse ways that the structures of this "'empty" notion' become dogmatically fixated, socially reified, aesthetically fetishised. Alternatively, to rather bluntly invert Cavanaugh and Scott, political demonology would be 'the analysis and criticism of political arrangements (including cultural-psychological, social and economic aspects) from the perspective of differing interpretations of [Satan's] ways in the world.'

A Case for Demonology

However, why demons? Why demonology? Why *political* demonology, specifically? Surely demonology was, as Bruce Lincoln notes, 'conclusively discredited in the European Enlightenment...drained of all but antiquarian interest' (2009: 45)? Surely to engage with it at all might contaminate me with its foolishness, or—'a less magical construction of the same dynamic' (*ibid.*)—potentially damage my reputation? To speak with seriousness of 'Satan's ways in the world', even at a distance, is perhaps to invite ridicule or academic perdition. In his 2009 article on the Zoroastrian demon Cēšmag, later reworked as chapter four of *Gods and Demons, Priests and Scholars* (2012), Lincoln argues that this understanding of demonology leads to an impoverished understanding of religion generally, since 'some of the most serious issues of ethics, cosmology, anthropology, and soteriology were—and still are—regularly engaged via demonology' (*ibid.*).³ The millennium had seen a boom of

³ While Lincoln's article is on Zoroastrian demonology he is referring here to 'demonology' broadly. He notes, for example, that despite the rise in studies of European demonology, there has been little study done on 'Iranian and other non-Western demonologies' (2009: 45). As noble as Lincoln's aim is, I would dispute the possibility or even desirability of locating 'demonology' beyond a Western, even Western Christian, context. While many scholars have identified a Zoroastrian or Mesopotamian precursors to (Judaean-)Christian apocalypse and demonologies (Clifford 2000; Cohn 1995, 2004; Forsyth 1989; Hultgård 2000; Kreyenbroek 2002), and while no origin is ever pure, the Christian

scholarly works on apocalyptic religiosities, most of which dealt in some manner with constructions of Satan or Antichrist, but works focusing on demonology were mostly centred on late medieval and early modern Europe.

The years since, however, have marked a shift. Since the beginning of 2014 several major monographs have been published addressing the continued socio-cultural relevance of demonic symbolism and demonological paradigms. These include Erin Runions' *The Babylon Complex* (2014), a nuanced analysis of the theopolitics of the Biblical figure of Babylon in contemporary America, Per Faxneld's *Satanic Feminism* (2014), which dissects nineteenth-century uses of demonic imagery as religio-political protest in the context of the early women's liberation movement, and Philip Almond's *The Devil* (2014), which charts a history of Satan until the Enlightenment through the lens of the 'demonic paradox'—his function as both God's enforcer and enemy. This surge of interest seems only to be increasing. The first half of 2015 has seen the publication of further works, each wrestling with the theoretical implications of demonologies. The English translation of Simona Forti's 2012 *Il nuovi demoni, New Demons* (2015), draws on Arendtian and Foucauldian thought to construct a new model of understanding evil as inextricable from systems of power/knowledge and the mechanics of their transgression. Virginia Krause's *Witchcraft, Demonology, and Confession in Early Modern France* (2015) utilises a localised study of the witch trials and their demonologies to explore the discursive construction of truth through concepts of sight and sightlessness, silence and speech. Finally, Sean McCloud's *American Possessions* (2015) analyses contemporary American spiritual warfare by exploring its ideological links to dominant neoliberal paradigms of thought, including individualism and self-help rhetoric (see also Buc 2015; Orlov 2015).⁴

demon is, in my view, a figuration of evil that specifically forms in the context of Christian ontotheology and history, a hybrid figure that draws not only on Zoroastrian dualism and 'Near Eastern combat myths', but also a Neo-Platonic philosophy that configures it as ontological-moral absence and a Hebrew monotheism that subordinates it within a hierarchy of power under an omnipotent deity. This is only its origin (one origin), and discounts the complex permutations of the demon's historical figuration, one genealogy of which I explore in Chapters One and Two, below. The Christian demon is a unique construct of its genealogy, and thus whether it is desirable or even possible to speak of 'demonology' or 'demonologies' in the trans-temporal and cross-cultural fashion used by Lincoln is dubious.

⁴ It should be noted that the majority of the research for this thesis had been conducted at the time of these works' publications, and while they contributed to the concluding theorisation of this project

One reason for demonology would thus be that it seems demons are becoming a hot topic, not just as a subject of antiquarian interests but as a discursive force that not only encodes a depth of complexity in its historical manifestations (Almond, Faxneld, Krause) but still influences the present (Forti, McCloud, Runions). However, even within this surge of appreciation there is an absence that I believe necessitates what I am calling ‘political demonology’: the genealogical links joining structures of demonology to contemporary paradigms of *demonisation* (more or less secularised in places, theological and non-secularised in others). Rhetorical practices of demonisation became a topic of political analysis during the Cold War, particularly within the context of McCarthyism, and have been remarked on often since 9/11, notably in the context of the demonisation of al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, or political Islam broadly.

Few studies have actually wrestled with the relationship of this demonisation to demonology in anything but vague terms, though there are notable exceptions. Indeed, ideas of ‘political demonology’ *as* demonisation have a history in political analysis. Michael Rogin popularized the term in *Ronald Reagan: The Movie, and Other Episodes in Political Demonology* (1987), in which he explores its ‘realist’ and ‘symbolist’ traditions and attempts to reconcile them. The realist tradition, as he identifies it, points to the utilisation of demonic imagery to mobilise support against political enemies (internal or external) but ignores the distortive aspects of the imagery used. The symbolist, by contrast, recognises the distortive aspects but ignores the underlying material causes. This political demonology sits at the heart of modern conspiracy theories and their (more or less valid) refutations. Uniting realist and symbolist perspectives, Rogin identifies a psychological core of political demonology in a double movement of dread and desire: the ‘oscillation between a fear of the breakdown of all difference and a desire for merger’ (1987: 280).⁵ Rogin here uses ‘political demonology’ to describe structures of demonisation in the political sphere, and gives it a psycho-sexual (un)conscious. While an important forebear to this study, however, I do not aim (solely) to analyse these political demonisations or their

many of my conclusions were reached independently. This is especially true regarding the works of Runions and McCloud, whose works overlap the most with this thesis.

⁵ For a recent, ‘localised’, study of this same structure in the demonic image of Babylon, see Runions (2014).

potential psychoanalytic causes. Some studies closer to my research focus emerge after 9/11. Joshua Gunn's 'The Rhetoric of Exorcism' (2004) analysed post-9/11 politics through the lens of exorcism, and of the War on Terror as a form of infinite exorcism that must work tirelessly against the demons of global politics. While he does link political rhetoric to Protestant practices of deliverance, however, Gunn does not link his observations to political theology or a secularisation of religious concepts. Other scholars analysing political demonology have also made structural observations without genealogically tying them to former demonologies or attempting to analyse underlying binarisations. Tom de Luca and John Buell have noted that, whether aimed at a culture, group, or individual, demonisation relies upon 'imputation of moral or spiritual failure, or deviance, or extreme incompetence (that is, moral failure for having illicitly assumed leadership)' (2005: 7). Stanley Cohen's seminal 1972 study of the Mods and Rockers, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (2002) bequeathed the influential idea of 'folk devils' as 'visible reminders of what we should not be' (*ibid.*: 2) to later scholarship (Flinders 2012a, 2012b; Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009; Lentini 2015). While these authors link (societal) devils to deviation, however, they do not examine these as part of broader matrices of (secularised) demonological concepts or how such ideas relate to theologico-political ideas of sovereignty or teleology (see also Denike 2003: 16; Juergensmeyer 2003: 185–6; Knight 2007: 94). In a different vein, Peter Berghoff (2009) analyses political evil and the capacity to talk publically of 'evil' after the Enlightenment discrediting of demonology, elaborating on the ways evil often takes its form according to the systems it opposes. While important, his argument is broad in scope and at times unnuanced. The most relevant part of his article to this study is his analysis of demonic others in 'instituted society' (society built around institutional bodies) which take the form either of outer enemy or internal discord. Berghoff seems to hold that this form of evil is unique to instituted society, however, by situating this understanding of evil into a theologico-political genealogy of sovereignty, my thesis explores the 'institutional' idea of evil as perhaps the core feature of 'evil' with regards to the historical and contemporary discursive structures of demonology.

Imputations of evil or deviation as evil in political demonologies arise from specific genealogical associations that these authors do not analyse, and is interwoven

with a range of related demonologico-political concepts. Earlier, I cited Sara Ahmed's *Willful Subjects*, her archive of those individuals (fictional and actual) who do not fit, whose very existence or being is coded as not fitting, who are made to fit or unmade because they cannot or will not fit. There is a genealogy here not only represented by historical alignments of Satan or demons with Jews (Kleg 1993: 98; Wistrich 2003), or black people (Brakke 2001; Verkerk 2001), or women (Denike 2003), but in an endurance of demonologico-political concepts—absence, deviation, counterfeiture—that code contemporary patterns of prejudice. One example is the 'demonologic' of counterfeiture that partly underwrites the concept of racial passing as discussed by Harryette Mullen in her brilliant article 'Optic White' (1994: 80–2):

Racism reifies whiteness to the extent that it is known or presumed to be unmixed with blackness. 'Pure' whiteness is imagined as something that is both external and internal, while the white complexion of the mulatto, quadroon, or octoroon is imagined as something superficial, only skin deep, the black blood passing on to the body an inherited impurity. 'Pure' whiteness has actual value, like legal tender, while the white-skinned African-American is like a counterfeit bill that is passed into circulation, but may be withdrawn at any point if discovered to be bogus. The inherited whiteness is a kind of capital, which may yield the dividend of freedom...The logic of passing is intrinsic in the logic of slavery, which defines the black as a facsimile or counterfeit of the white in order to deny the rights and privileges of whiteness.

Counterfeit whiteness, like counterfeit money, passes for a value it does not possess and, by doing so, threatens, justifies, and deconstructs the allegedly 'intrinsic' value of the thing it counterfeits. As Derrida writes, and a point to which I will return throughout this thesis, a counterfeit is not just something false but a falsity capable of masquerading convincingly as a truth, and so destabilises all discourse about 'truth' since one cannot be certain if one is dealing with a truth or just a simulacrum (1992: 170).

Ahmed (2015: n.p.) has recently discussed Mullen's work in which she links counterfeiture to two contemporary social demons: the asylum seeker and welfare recipient.

[T]hose who claim asylum are assumed to be bogus, to be passing their way into the nation through fraud, unless they demonstrate otherwise...In these instances passing is understood as a deliberate willful act of fraud; a way of falsely *receiving benefits*. The welfare recipient and the asylum seeker are both passing figures in this sense. You have to demonstrate that you are not passing for what you are not (that you are what you claim you

are) in order to take up residence within a nation or to receive any benefits.

This passing figure, counterfeiter and counterfeit both, troubles a system that excludes it yet serves as the reason for that system's legitimacy: the system exists to guard against the passing figure, but that figure's semblance of ipseity reveals the unstable logic of that guarding. Passing is a discourse of gates, of passing through gates that should remain closed: counterfeiture as seeming-without-being, even without-Being—demonological absence is both moral and ontological. To demonise the welfare recipient or asylum seeker here is to construct them as counterfeit, and at the core of the demonologico-political idea of the counterfeit is an assumption of ontological absence. This absence is inextricable from deviation. As I explore in this thesis, the demon—and the demonised—becomes absence via deviation from a proper order. Their claims lack truth—they lack truth; their claims lack substance—they lack substance; they are not what they claim—they are not.⁶

How does this structure of counterfeiture relate to the theopolitics of that most infamous of demonological counterfeitures—the apocalyptic 'counterfeit world order' (Boyer 2000: 175) of Antichrist? How would this counterfeit kingdom, masked in a semblance of sovereign ipseity, reinforce and undermine the legitimacy and truth of its original and successor? And how might the combination of 'near-perfect imitation and essential difference' (Buc 2015: 15) figured in the demonological counterfeit itself reflect the genealogy of theopolitical sovereignty itself, its own processes of repetition and reinscription? These are the questions this thesis addresses as it explores the contingencies that stretch between sovereignty and its others.

Contingencies (A Question of Good)

From this brief outline of political demonology, several features of what my project does and does not attempt to do begin to emerge. For example, while it is about demons, it is not an exploration of the question or nature of evil. Or rather, it is not an exploration of evil outside of its structural relationship to what is constructed as good.

⁶ A similar construction operates in contemporary demonisations of Muslims, in which, after the initial construction of 'Good' (secularised) and 'Bad' (radicalised) Muslims outlined by Mahmood Mamdani (2002), the former are constructed as counterfeits, radicals passing for moderates (see Chapter Four, below).

This differentiates it from many older scholarly works on demonology or the figure of Satan, which frame their studies in terms of human attempts to wrestle with the existence of evil: as the ‘attempt to name, comprehend, and defend against all that threatens, frightens, and harms us’ (Lincoln 2012: 31). Probably the main scholarly work on demonology, Jeffrey Burton Russell’s multi-volume history of the Devil from pre-Christian times to the twentieth century (1977–1986), frames itself as exploring the human attempt to explain the reality of radical evil, defined as the harm deliberately inflicted on/by sentient beings (1977: 17) of which the Devil is the ‘best-known symbol’ (1986: 17). Neil Forsyth’s *The Old Enemy* (1989) avoids the question of evil by focusing on Satan as a narrative character locked in an adversarial role from which he cannot be extricated. This shift in analysis from radical evil to radical contingency was notably influential on Stuart Clark’s magisterial study of the European witchcraft persecutions *Thinking with Demons* (1997), one of the seminal texts of the millennial re-evaluation of early modern demonology, aspects of which I discuss in Chapter One.

The middle ground between existential evil and narrative contingency is often walked by ‘biographies’ of Satan, which, while analysing his mutations in shifting cultural-political circumstances, frame their genealogies around a symbolic continuity of ‘evil’ that psychologically returns us to him (Almond 2014; Kelly 2006; Maxwell-Stuart 2009). A similar trajectory is reflected in scholarship that addresses historical identifications of Antichrist, such as works by Robert Fuller (1994), Bernard McGinn (2000), and Kevin Hughes (2005). While all these works are attuned to changes in Western Christian societies that provoked discursive transformations of demonology in response to circumstance, they assume that it is the experience of evil which returns us to Satan and his cohorts. We continue to discursively utilise the Devil since he speaks to our lived experiences. These are, above all, secularised histories: they assume demonic unreality *a priori* and therefore construct psychological or materialist reasons for his discursive endurance.

This is not to argue that *demons* exist—though the protagonists of this thesis certainly believe they do—but rather that *belief in demons* exists and this belief is able to inspire and drive action on its own terms. This formula resides at the heart of much of the millennial witchcraft scholarship, and has been encapsulated recently by

Philippe Buc. Commenting on the Devil's structural function as the 'theological principle for both similarity and alterity, for both near-perfect imitation and essential difference', Buc (2015: 15–16) relays that scholars will often adopt the stance that Satan's theologico-political role arises from society's need to construct or dissolve sites of difference or ambiguity (sometimes violently). He continues:

In this family of hypotheses, Christianity postulates the Devil either because it needs to account for otherness and ambiguity or because it needs to generate otherness and dissolve ambiguity. But a scholar who does not reduce religious ideas to social processes should propose the obverse: The theological postulate of the existence of Satan—ape of God yet total other to God—nurtures an acute attentiveness to otherness and ambiguity and fosters extremely violent reactions to them...Is belief in Satan (and the literal demonizing of other humans) a hypostasis of difference (or of its mimesis)? Or is belief in Satan the cause of the manic scrutiny of difference (or of mimesis)? (*ibid.*)

I do not try to resolve Buc's question in this thesis, but take it as a guide. This thesis does not try to pathologise or otherwise reduce the demonologically-coded anxieties of the examined authors to be the result of personal or social neuroses. At the same time I do not take these anxieties at face value, but deconstruct them in the context of their structural reliance on their demonological others. Demonology, like the demons it names, is radically contingent. It encodes the anxieties and prejudices of its contexts, articulating them through its demonologico-political discursive inheritance. My thesis unpicks these discursive structures, taking as its starting point not that demonisation is occurring but rather *who or what* is being demonised, and how the demonisation of this *who* or *what* encodes the demonologico-political conceptualities of its genealogy and how this relates to figurations of sovereign order. As such, it does not address demonology with respect to its coding of a human *experience of evil*, but rather of the *naming of evil*—with *what* or *who* is *marked* as 'evil', with those whose *outopia* is discursively constructed as the condition of *eutopia*'s possibility.

I am not arguing that demonology *cannot* be used to explore the experience of 'evil' or to doubt the existence of horrific violences of which the label 'evil' might be appropriately applied. While these are important considerations, my thesis is oriented towards the analysis of 'evil', or more specifically with the 'demon' as signifier of 'evil', as part of a discursive formation operating in a specific context—the post-9/11 American Christian Right, and specifically the 'spiritual warfare' milieu. In both its

perspective and its contextual focus, this thesis shares a position with that taken by Erin Runions and Sean McCloud. Both analyse religio-cultural motifs of demons in contemporary America with regards to their relationships to questions of globalisation and the changing politics of gender and sexual identity (Runions 2014) and the (in)separability of the neoliberalist individual from effects of (familial, national) history and wider social and institutional structures (McCloud 2015).⁷ As these works testify, the naming of ‘evil’ in demonological discourses often ties into existing cultural anxieties which, rather than reacting to a perennial human experience of evil and adopting different clothing, respond in complex and multifaceted ways to specific societal attitudes and anxieties, often encoding highly contextual ideologies. At the same time, however, the demon—and its figuration of contingency—has a history. While I do not hold that the enduring relevance of Satan or demons stems from human experiences of (radical, political, metaphysical) evil, they still endure as symbolic representations of ‘evil’. The Devil and demons occupy a (post-)Christian genealogy of the figuration of evil which gives it its religio-politico-cultural potency. The first part of this thesis explores selected aspects of this genealogy. The second explores political demonology in the context of the demonologies found in the more vociferous parts of the American Christian Right. It is to this milieu that I now turn.

(SPIRITUAL) WARFARE IN A TIME OF TERROR

The post-9/11 era, Michael Barkun notes, produced a cultural fixation on invisible dangers, ‘dangers thought to be posed by invisible adversaries who might wield invisible weapons’ (2011: 141). The terrorist, occluded in plain sight with hidden bombs and bio-chemical weapons, is the most visible of these invisible foes. The

⁷ Runions’ and McCloud’s works are perhaps the best examples of explorations of the figuration of demons in relation to specific ideological constructs in contemporary American society. While there is a long line of scholarship addressing the history and transformations of American apocalyptic belief since World War II (Boyer 1992; Fuller 1994; O’Leary 1995; Wójcik 1997) and the rise of the Christian Right (Bivins 2003, 2008; Flippen 2011; Lahr 2007; Miller 2009, 2014; D.K. Williams 2010a), many of these works analyse the phenomenon in relation to specific socio-cultural events (e.g. Communism, Cold War geopolitics, the ‘culture wars’) rather than analysing the way texts and movements encode specific ideological structures. Molly Worthen (2013) breaks with this trend by analysing the relationship of American evangelicalism to ideas of the secular and of secularism on the level of ideological (in)compatibility.

illegal immigrant is another—harbinger of crime, covertly traversing borders that ‘should’ be stable. There has also been a fixation on pandemics, silently transmitted, brought from foreign places and/or unleashed by terrorists. In conspiracy subcultures, the drama of the attacks created surges in theories of shadowy organisations shaping civilisation from behind the scenes (Barkun 2013). Collectively, these disparate fixations trace patterns of ‘pollution and defilement’ (Barkun 2011: 83). The terrorist, the illegal alien, the criminal: ‘potential defilers who bring impurities into what was a previously unsullied community’ (*ibid.*: 85). Like impurities, they require purification. Like demons, they require exorcism.

The figure of the demon represents one of the oldest and most paradigmatic of (in)visible enemies, genealogically intersecting with both the stranger and disease. As David Brakke outlines, early Christian monks would journey into the wilderness to battle the invisible forces of evil with their minds and spirits, and any capitulations they made would become written on their bodies (2006: 17). Sometimes, these demons became visible—as Ethiopians, for example, their melanistic skin marking their demonic natures (Brakke 2001, 2006: 157–181). The demon was invisible, but became visible in the figure of the other or the marks of its defilement left on the self. By resisting its temptations, the self could be tempered into a model of divine unity—the *monakhós*, or ‘single one’, the monk (Brakke 2006: 5). The scenario Brakke outlines here is taken from third and fourth century Egyptian Christianity, however its thematic constructs closely reflect the concerns of the writers analysed in this thesis. These spiritual warriors also battle invisible demons made visible as the other, striving to preserve or reassert an essential spiritual unity—of the self, the Church, the nation—against the machinations of demonic deviation. However, even if they draw on similar scriptures and similar struggles of sacred unity against demonic differentiation, the ideological substrates and contexts of these struggles reconfigure their projects. The battlefield here is not the demon-infested Egyptian desert, but the no-less-demonised urban and suburban spaces of modern America.

And There Was (Cold) War in Heaven

While motifs of divine warriors battling demons is not a recent motif in Christianity, the specific configuration of beliefs and practices termed ‘spiritual warfare’ emerged

in 1940s Pentecostalism, spreading from there to other evangelical and charismatic Christianities.⁸ While not intrinsically apocalyptic in orientation, in the US spiritual warfare adopted an explicitly apocalyptic configuration in its ‘Third Wave’, beginning around the end of the Cold War, when several major figures within the movement decided that the end-times were drawing closer. I detail this ‘Third Wave’ in Chapter Five, however it is useful to outline spiritual warfare’s core features here, since these features underwrite many of the cultural anxieties explored in earlier parts of this thesis.

Discourses of spiritual warfare construct a worldview in which spiritual and material worlds act as intertwined battlefields in a cosmic struggle for the human soul, an apocalyptic paradigm in which ‘Satan has amassed an army of evil spirits that he is using to attack and demonize humans in an effort to win their souls for hell’ (McCloud 2013: 170). The language and ideas used in spiritual warfare are often highly militaristic and territorial, and manifest in both ‘internal’ and ‘external’ variants. The external discourse of spiritual warfare is bound to a neo-colonial missionary project joined to civil religious notions of America as a saviour nation, aimed at breaking the last, great metaphysical ‘strongholds’ of demonic power in the ‘10/40 horizon’—the space between the tenth and fortieth parallels where Christianity was weakest: North Africa, the Middle East, India, China, and Japan, among others (Holvast 2009: xiii, 286). By contrast, the ‘internal’ discourse is centred on the US itself, in which satanic forces work, like subversive insurgents, to undermine ‘Real America’ and its sacred mission. The development of ‘anti-Christian’ paradigms of thought and being—advances in gay and lesbian rights, abortion rights, multireligious and multicultural paradigms (especially syncretistic New Age ideas), and the rapid march of a globalisation that fractures US identity across the world as much as it expands its power—has caused proponents of spiritual warfare to project the idea of

⁸ Surprisingly, there has been little scholarship produced specifically on American spiritual warfare, as opposed to as part of broader twentieth-century Christian apocalypticisms (Barkun 2013; Gribben 2011). Until Sean McCloud’s *American Possessions* (2015), the main works on the topic were Rene Holvast’s historical analysis of the phenomenon, *Spiritual Mapping in the United States and Argentina, 1989–2005: A Geography of Fear* (2009), and Graham Russell Smith’s as-yet-unpublished PhD thesis ‘The Church Militant: A Study of “Spiritual Warfare” in the Anglican Charismatic Renewal’ (2011). In addition to these are smaller studies focusing on elements like haunting (McCloud 2013), the usefulness of the term (Warren 2012), or the usage of scriptural figures like Jezebel (Stark and Deventer 2009).

an enemy grander and more unified than the individual struggles. As René Holvast summarises: ‘The threat could not be human—it came from behind the scenes, from Satan and his forces’ (*ibid.*: 289).

Holvast links the development of spiritual warfare to both the geopolitics and rhetoric of the Cold War and to enduring paradigms of American ‘civil religion’.⁹ Yet while Holvast explicitly states that prominent spiritual warfare paradigms ‘shared [their] graphic conceptualizing of evil with [their] surrounding culture and politics’, he limits these conceptualisations to rhetoric; that ‘Graphic terms like the evil empire, the axis of evil...remind the reader of the notions of ancient Apocalyptic dualism’ (*ibid.*: 289). Considering the context in which spiritual warfare emerged, this analysis appears lacklustre. Like the Cold War geopolitics in which it grew, Cold War spiritual warfare was grounded in a binarisation of global territory. The war between angels and demons, God and Satan, mimicked the terrestrial battle between the Christian US and atheistic Soviet Union. A fixation on the ‘10/40 horizon’ might seem at odds with this reading, however such regions were of high strategic importance and, in the case of the Middle East, sites of contestation between the superpowers. In a sense, these nations adopt the character of what Sean McCloud calls ‘spatial limbos’—‘interstitial and contested no-man’s lands’ where demons manifest through the sins of history (2015: 51). Or, more directly, that these nations have become *demonised*—a word that in this context has another meaning beyond its popular one. In spiritual warfare, a demonised person or institution is one that has been afflicted and/or influenced by demons. The possibility (and actuality) of this affliction/influence can arise as a result of a variety of factors, including personal sins, familial inheritance, and traumas both personal and/or geographical/historical, all of which open persons, objects, or places to demonic infiltration (McCloud 2015).

This demonisation is, of course, double: spiritual demonisation modifies the demonised’s behaviour in ways that lead to their social demonisation. They are usually those coded as not fitting: they are rebellious, prideful, deviant, wilful people who do not accept their place. Whether this lack of acceptance is manifested in their domination to or over others is often not a factor (different demons might be involved, but both are equally demonised). Both manifest as deviation from a prescribed socio-

⁹ I consider both in depth in Chapter Three.

spiritual reality and are healed by re-aligning themselves with that reality. In concluding his study of Anglican Charismatic spiritual warfare, Graham Russell Smith writes that, within spiritual warfare discourses, ‘The nature of evil is “rebellion”; concepts of “nothingness” and “negation” whilst helpful are inadequate in describing the essence of evil, which is centred around a willful opposition to God’s rule’ (2011: 346). Here, Smith highlights three key features: the relationship of evil to negation, which ties into historical associations of evil as privation of good, the inadequacy of this privation theory in favour of one of active opposition, and that this opposition is first and foremost an opposition to sovereignty.¹⁰

This is a relationship I will chart throughout the case studies examined in this thesis. While the form of rebellion alters, it is always figured as wilful deviation from a proper order of being. This proper order, centred on the image of a sovereign deity, is social, political, spiritual, personal, spatial and temporal. It is, in short, a total order. Spiritual warfare demonologies therefore construct a vision not solely of orthodoxy or orthopraxy, of proper belief or proper praxis, but with what I will term ‘orthotaxy’—a ‘correct order’ or ‘arrangement’ of society, the individual, and history itself, any perceived deviation from which must be rectified lest reality collapse. This orthotaxy has specific features, however, which must be explored.

Three Faces of Orthotaxy

The geopolitics of spiritual warfare sketched above would represent a (re)figuration of the external discourse, but there is also the internal discourse that perceives a demonic hand operating behind the scenes in contemporary America and with which this thesis is mainly concerned. While being part of the same paradigm, this internalisation requires a different approach. Where the ‘10/40 horizon’ encoded a neo-colonial logic of the salvific civilising mission, the internal discourse can be construed as a

¹⁰ The most enduring form of the ‘privation theory’ of evil comes from Augustine of Hippo. While my thesis does not address privation theory its core features underlie many of my case studies, primarily its conflation of goodness with being. As Dietmar Wyrwa summarises, ‘everything that is is good...every being, every creation, is made according to God’s creation plan’ (2004: 126–7). This conflation links directly to its opposite, of evil with absence, and absence with deviation. As Charles Mathewes notes, evil is both the deviation of the cosmos from originary goodness and the sinful deviation of humanity from its originary nature in the *imago Dei*, resulting in ‘a distorted, misoriented, false imitation of what the human should be’ (2004: 6–7): sinful human as counterfeit human.

discourse of uncanny counter-colonisation: the carving out of interstitial sites of contestation in the heart of a homeland that should remain secure. These threats, these demons, threaten to distort (or perhaps fulfil) the sacred mission of the United States. As such, they must be identified and exorcised. At the heart of this demonological desire for identification and excision, however, resides a vision of proper order that must be maintained or restored—it is this vision of order that I term *orthotaxy*, and it is this concept, its key features, and its relation to spiritual warfare discourses that I will enumerate here.

I designate orthotaxy as defined primarily by three core features of discursive self-construction: *integrity*, *incontestability*, and *inevitability*. That is to say that it constructs itself as unified and whole, as the ground of legitimacy (and so beyond legitimate critique), and as teleological omega point of the historical process. The concept of orthotaxy, as I define it, is closely aligned with theologico-political concepts of sovereignty as (in)divisible ground of earthly order, whose role is to guide its subjects towards specific (benevolent) ends. While it is aligned with sovereignty, however, it is not identical to it: orthotaxy refers primarily to a discursive structure of ‘proper order’. The sovereign may be the central peg or lynchpin of this discursive structure, but the idea of orthotaxy encapsulates the broader web of socio-politico-spiritual relations that surround it. Conceptually, orthotaxy shifts focus from the sovereign as singular figure to the structures of order dependant on that sovereign, and on which it too depends.

Orthotaxic order as manifested in the spiritual warfare discourses analysed in this thesis is at once spatial and temporal, social and personal, material and spiritual. Moreover, deviation within any of these spheres can infest and distort the others. One of orthotaxy’s central features is therefore, like the demonologies it envisions, its contingency, constructed through networks of parallels and metonymies. The most widespread form of this in spiritual warfare discourses is the interconnection of the material and spiritual worlds, discussed above. A central example of this, discussed in Chapter Five and Six, is the fixation in certain forms of spiritual warfare on the body. This body is at once the human body (physical, mental, spiritual) and the social body of the community, nation, or church, and alterations to the former—for example, through ‘illicit’ sexual activity or technological modification—are seen as impacting

the latter, fragmenting the completion and cohesion of society as a whole. This contravention also works in reverse: demonic social-spiritual forces contravene the individual's physical, mental, and spiritual integrity. This discourse leads to a fixation on stable borders—of the body, community, or nation—which must be maintained or restored.

Orthotaxy thus posits itself (ideally) as *integral*—complete, unblemished—and contravention of this integrity as necessitating purification. This posited integrity is tied to orthotaxy's posited *incontestability*. It is the proper order of things. As Preston King outlines in his critique of sovereignty, the ideological construction of order 'is intimately associated with the attempt to defend particular orders, not on the grounds that they are preferable to others, but on the grounds that there is an Order *in se* which trumps all other forms of moral concern' (2013: xv–xvi). An orthotaxy manifests as the quintessence of this structure. It constructs itself as 'Order *in se*'—a timeless, proper way of being, constituted *a priori*—and competing systems of being or believing as the end of moral and ontological reality. This is not due to inconsistencies in these competing systems that might contravene them, but because of their deviation (real or imagined) from the orthotaxic system: since orthotaxy is legitimate *a priori*, competing systems are *a priori* illegitimate.

The construction of orthotaxy as timeless truth and of deviation as absence of legitimacy also manifests as a constructed absence of futurity: deviant systems of being are constructed as having no future. This ties into orthotaxy's third core feature, one closely entwined with spiritual warfare's fixation on apocalyptic eschatology: its *inevitability*. Not solely a 'correct order' of space and society, orthotaxy is also a 'correct order' of time, one that is linear and teleological. In secular varieties, this belief might manifest in terms of Fukuyama's end of history. Within spiritual warfare discourses, this *telos* relies on concepts of God's sovereign control over history. Since history is under the control of a sovereign agent constructed as aligned with the spiritual warriors, the victory of their paradigm is assured. In the works of the warriors themselves, this inevitable victory is closely associated with forms of typological exegesis.

Typological or figural thinking is a specific form of scriptural exegesis that blossomed in medieval Christianity. Phrased neutrally, typology constructs a relation

of (pre)figuration and fulfilment between the events of the Old and New Testaments. As Erich Auerbach summarises in his 1944 essay 'Figura', 'The Old Testament, both as a whole and in its more important details, is a concrete historical prefiguration of the Gospel'. Adam and Moses, for example, are constructed as prefigurations of Christ, who fulfils their figures, and the heavenly New Jerusalem fulfils the figure of the old, terrestrial Jerusalem. One thing this typological structure accomplished was that it made both 'old' and 'new' fundamentally historical constructs—there is never a *new*, as such—something Auerbach contrasts to what he saw as the 'modern' view of history (in Biddick 2013: 5):

whereas in the modern view the event is always self-sufficient and secure, in the figural interpretation the fact is subordinated to an interpretation which is fully secured to begin with: the event is enacted according to the ideal model which is a prototype situated in the future and thus far only promised.

This construction of history extended beyond the scripture, however. In the words of Richard Topping, through typology 'extra-biblical life and events were held together with the Old Testament as incomplete figures,' which while meaningful and real, stood in 'tensive relation' to their fulfilment 'in the story of Jesus or in the universal story from creation to *eschaton*, of which it was the effectually shaping masterpiece' (2007: 131).

The structures of typology are inextricable from ideas of God as sovereign arbiter of history. As theologian Sidney Greidanus clarifies, while allegorical readings of scripture draw thematic links between passages and events, typology 'is limited to discovering specific analogies along the axis of God's acts in redemptive history' and without the foundation of God's sovereign direction of the historical process cannot exist (1999: 249). Its retroactive structure, moving 'from New Testament fulfillment to the past type' (*ibid.*: 252), reveals in the words of Georges A. Barrois 'the progression of Sacred History toward its *telos*,' a 'sphere of divine economy in which man and the cosmos progress under the guidance of God towards eternal salvation' (in *ibid.*: 255). 'Old Testament' persons and events are reinscribed as figures of their New Testament counterparts, who become not (only) a repetition but the advent of an archetype-yet-to-be. Kathleen Biddick (2013) in her recent psychoanalytic exploration of the mechanisms of typology in medieval Christianity, notes that typological

exegesis is predicated on the supercession of Christianity over Judaism, the Church over Israel, which continually erased the persistence of Jewish people in the exegetes' present. The typological structure historicises in order to efface the continued existence of a past that has supposedly been overcome. This has a key relationship to the demonologies the spiritual warriors examined below construct: their demons have always-already been defeated, and not just in terms of a general defeat effected by Christ's victory over death on the cross, but in specific prefigurations in the Hebrew Bible: the triumph of Israel over its gentile neighbours (Chapter Four), Elijah's battle with and Jehu's triumph over Jezebel (Chapter Five) and the end of all flesh wrought by the Flood (Chapter Six). As exorcism works by reminding the demon its defeat has already occurred, the spiritual warriors assuage anxieties about present darknesses by reminding themselves that the sun has already risen.

However, the demons are not so eager to listen, and these demons are legion. Like the spiritual warfare milieu itself, the satanic hand they see behind contemporary life has many forms. My case studies, which run from political Islam to the politics of gender and sexual identity to trans/posthumanist technoscience and seem almost jarringly disparate, have been selected to signal this diversity while also conveying significant discursive similarities. No matter their differences these groups are coded through the hermeneutic of political demonology. They are all manifestations of Satan's ways in the world, serving to distort the indistortable order of creation. These groups are demonised, figuratively and actually, but they are demonised in different ways. Each sketches a distinct but similarly mutually-constitutive relationship to the divine order it is seen as striving to defeat and the theologico-political sovereignty they oppose. To pre-empt my conclusions, demonologies of political Islam construct a discourse of competing unity, an uncanny other so (un)like the self which threatens to replace sovereign order with an abject simulacrum. Those of gender and sexuality articulate anxieties of process, flow, and (in)stability that expose the sovereign as always-already absent. Those of transhumanism, meanwhile, wrestle with the relation of the religious (the Christian) to those processes of secularisation that are its progeny, its heirs and/or usurpers. They sketch different oppositions to the orthotaxic structure of God's rule. They contest its right to rule, dissolve its thresholds, and reconfigure its ends. In doing so, they reveal the dependency of that construction of

sovereign orthotaxy upon its others: its need for enemies to give form to its structural instabilities. It is these instabilities that this thesis deconstructs.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The body of this thesis has three parts and seven chapters. Part I (Chapters One through Three) is more theoretical and explores a genealogy of Christian demonology through its figuration of absence/deviation, its relationship to theopolitical sovereignty, and lays out the present socio-political context. Part II (Chapters Four through Six) explores the case studies. Part III (Chapter Seven and a brief Coda) concludes the thesis by tying the textual explorations of Part II back into the theorisations of Part I.

Taking point from Smith's definition of the nature of evil as deviation from God's rule, Chapter One conducts a genealogical analysis of the current scholarship on demonology through a focus on its relationship to theopolitical deviation. It looks at two key periods about which scholarship on Christian demonology has been produced. Firstly, the European witch-hunts (c.1400–1700) in which demonology is formally instituted and demons reconstructed as an active threat to Christendom, and demonological witchcraft is constructed as the ultimate other to (legitimate) political order. Secondly, reconfigurations that follow the European Enlightenment, manifesting both in the symbolic appropriations of Satan by Romantic and modern emancipatory projects as a rejection of pre-existing hierarchies, and also in the emergence of 'world satanic conspiracies' like the Illuminati, the Palladist hoax, and 'Jewish conspiracy', which have a strong influence (both structurally and directly) on contemporary apocalyptic demonologies.

Chapter Two focuses on the relationship of demonology to the theologico-political structures of sovereignty. It explores the radical contingency of the sovereign and the demons that oppose it by analysing two classical theorists of sovereignty, Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes, both of whom construct demonology in opposition to their visions of legitimate sovereign order. Framing this exploration through the lens of Jacques Derrida's analysis of the interconnectedness of the figures of the sovereign

and the beast, one above and one beneath the law, author and other, it investigates the dependency of sovereignty upon its figuration of others that ceaselessly contest its self-constructed incontestability.

Chapter Three moves these theoretical and genealogical analyses forward into the recent past in order to lay out the socio-political context of the case studies. After exploring the central tenets of American ‘civil religion’, the chapter focuses on the development of neoconservatism and evangelicalism in the crucible of the Cold War, analysing their shared construction of a notion of authentic American identity via opposition to both international and domestic others. This construction of authenticity aimed to rejuvenate Real America through a return to a ‘Judaean-Christian morality’ from which it had deviated, and carried forward from the Cold War and post-Cold War period into the present, mutating as the fall of the Soviet Union generated a need to create or concentrate on new self-consolidating others: feminists, gay and lesbian people, Muslims, etcetera.

Chapter Four through Six constitute the case studies. Chapter Four analyses contemporary demonisations of (political) Islam. It surveys both religious apocalyptic and secular texts in order to explore shared demonologico-political structures. Analysing underlying similarities with the antisemitic ‘Jewish conspiracy’, the chapter explores the rise of conspiracies of the Muslim infiltration of America as figured in ‘Muslim Brotherhood’ and ‘Obama-as-secret-Muslim’ discourses, and links these to a rising ‘Muslim Antichrist’ discourse in which the nation of Israel is configured as a projection of Western purity whose contamination by an Islamic other must be prevented. Through analysing the shared features of these conspiracies and apocalyptic prophecies, I explore a pervasive obsession with *shari’a* as the totalitarian ‘heart’ of Islam, and via this of the figuration of Islam not (only) as ‘other to a self’ but as ‘an-other self’—a diabolical model of stability and monolithic unity that threatens to replace the authors’ vision of order with an uncanny semblance.

Chapter Five shifts fully to religious texts, analysing the recurrent figure of Jezebel in spiritual warfare as the demonological representations of shifting norms in gender and sexuality, and as embodiments of ‘witchcraft’ as a system of thought antithetical to God’s own. The chapter draws on a broad survey of contemporary spiritual warfare texts that focus on Jezebel, ultimately centring on texts by two

‘media ministers’, Landon Schott and Jennifer LeClaire, who exemplify the pervasive trends of the genre. Analysing Jezebel’s ‘triple alterity’ as woman, foreigner, and idolater, the chapter unpicks the underlying conflation of multiplicity with absence in opposition to a stable, present, phallic *taxon* it continually disrupts.

Last of the case studies, Chapter Six analyses a subset of spiritual warfare discourse focused on trans/posthumanist technoscience. Drawing on a number of works in this milieu, it concentrates on the voluminous oeuvre of Thomas Horn, a particularly prominent member whose works represent the most cohesive synthesis of its concerns. Analysing Horns’ and others’ construction of technological advancement as having the potential to efface the *imago Dei* within humanity and replace it with a demonic counterfeit, the chapter deconstructs Horn’s and others’ fixation on concepts of (divine) origin and destiny, manifested in a typological fixation on the days of Noah and its apocalyptic return, and on images of America as a conspiracist vehicle of demonic domination. Through exploring this fixation on origin and destiny through the lens of transhumanism’s own genealogical links to earlier Christian soteriologies of earthly perfectibility, I unpack these anti-transhumanist apocalypticisms as revealing the instability of the authors’ own visions of inevitable predestination.

Chapter Seven unites the observations made in the case studies with the theoretical explorations of Part I. Returning to concepts of deviation and counterfeiture, it explores the case studies through recourse to Derrida’s analyses of ipseity and iterability. Sketching a model of sovereignty as the indivisible heart of orthotaxy that is unavoidably, constitutively divided as it reinscribes itself in different political forms—passing from God to king to state to people—it reveals the demonological counterfeit order to be the disavowed heart of sovereignty, which reveals orthotaxy to itself be the counterfeit order it projects. Indeed, like 9/11 to the Cold War, the demonic counterfeit of sovereignty might be the implosive finale of the theologico-political concept of sovereignty itself, killed by its own convolutions and contradictions.

PART I

A Descention

CHAPTER ONE

Delineating Deviation, Articulating Absence

Demonology in History and Literature—A Genealogical Review

Why could we not at least try to walk through the 'senseless' maze of this folly called demonology, which posits the presence of a paradoxical 'other,' at once radically different from us and so close and similar to us, an enemy that finds in our minds its primary and most abhorred interlocutor?

— Armando Maggi (2001: 3)

Graham Smith summarised the nature of evil in spiritual warfare discourses as *rebellion*: ‘concepts of “nothingness” and “negation” whilst helpful are inadequate in describing the essence of evil, which is centred around a willful opposition to God’s rule’ (2011: 346). Demonological evil is thus inextricably structural, defined by wilful opposition to divine order, to God’s sovereign will. In my Introduction, I discussed this divine order under a conceptual rubric of *orthotaxy*. Often (if not always) explicitly theological, I outlined orthotaxy as sovereign in claims and teleological in orientation. It constructs an order of reality (figured as Order *in se*) grounded upon ideas of a ‘straight’ or ‘correct’ ‘arrangement’ of being(s) inextricably tied to a teleological structure of history, structures that can only be posited through the construction of its others: the crooked, the deviant, the counterfeit.

This idea of proper order manifests on several interlocking levels that this thesis explores, including not just ‘cosmic’ order but in specific societal arrangements and the integrity of physical bodies. In an orthotaxic framework, deviation from or disruption of this order is seen as aberrant and dangerous, and must be eliminated to

guarantee the health, security, and continued existence of a body—social, personal, spiritual. As the heart of this self-constitutive other, the demon is fundamental to orthotaxy's construction. In the following chapter I attend to the demon's relation to orthotaxy in connection to the theopolitical genealogy of sovereignty. In this chapter, I explore the discursive figuration of the demon through the lens of absence/deviation as analysed—if not always in these terms—in the existing scholarship on demonology. Through doing so, this chapter traces a relationship between these concepts as tied to the construction of demonological evil as rebellion against the sovereign will. As the demon is the one that is constructed as that which wilfully deviates from orthotaxy, it becomes coded as that which must be ended for orthotaxy's maintenance or (re)assertion. Demonology identifies and categorises this demon to facilitate its elimination.

By examining prior scholarship around Christian demonology, this chapter seeks to outline themes and structural relations that are genealogically important for this thesis' contemporary contextual focus. It explores these across two sections. The first analyses scholarship on demonology centred on late medieval/early modern European witchcraft and its persecution (c.1400–1700 CE). It concentrates on the idea of the witch as religio-political dissident aligned with demonic powers. The second explores reinscriptions of demonology after its Enlightenment 'discrediting', including the rise of conspiracist discourses and the polyvalent reconfiguration of the Devil in post-Milonic discourses of Romantic and symbolic Satanisms. I focus on these periods for specific reasons. The former (the witch-hunts) contains the formal institutionalisation of demonology within the Catholic Church, and the rise of the nation-state and ideas of political sovereignty—political concepts closely related to the territorial dynamics and ideological constructions of witchcraft and its persecution.¹ In the discourse around the witch-hunts, demons and their human agents

¹ It is, of course, possible to identify the origin of demonology in earlier periods, and its formal institution draws on these formulations. I have chosen not to primarily due to priorities of scope, since addressing a complete genealogy of demonology as relating not only to early Christianity but pre-Christian formulations in Jewish apocalypticism and Near Eastern combat myths requires more space than this thesis allows. Two of the more detailed recent studies of the development of Christian demonological figures from early Jewish apocalypticism are Lambertus Lietaert Peerbolte's *The Antecedents of Antichrist* (1996) and Andrei Orlov's *Dark Mirrors* (2011). Some works dealing with the development of Jewish apocalypticism include those by John Joseph Collins (1984, 1998), James VanderKam (2000; VanderKam and Adler 1996), and, more recently, Richard Horsley (2010).

are constructed as networks of traitorous heretics wilfully working to distort God's creation. Notions of human-demonic alliance, as well as witchcraft as a practice of subversion (sexual, spiritual, political), are prominent features of the contemporary American demonologies examined in later chapters, and the majority of scholarship exploring these topics focuses on the European witch-hunts. The latter (post-Enlightenment) section addresses reconfigurations of demonology after it is, in Lincoln's words, 'conclusively discredited' (2009: 45). These reconfigurations set a stage for several recurrent ideas in contemporary American demonologies that are genealogically related to those formulated in the witch-hunts, including alignments of Satan with scientific rationalism and emancipatory political projects (positively and negatively construed), and the rise of conspiracy theories that posit occult networks working to commandeer society for nefarious ends. Exploring scholarship on these topics thus constitutes necessary groundwork for the present study.

STATECRAFT AND WITCHCRAFT: PERVERTING THE PROPER, 1320–1634

The period of European history correlating to the witchcraft persecutions is usually seen as 1400–1700, growing from the mid-late fifteenth century—with the publication of several meticulous witchcraft handbooks and technical treatises—and reaching its violent apogee in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These 'witch-hunts', which overlapped with but were not identical to the persecution of Christian heretics in earlier centuries, resulted in the trial and execution of significant numbers of women and men for crimes of apostasy and black magic, religious crimes that became increasingly aligned with political treason (Boureau 2006: 72; Levack 2006: 66). Approximately eighty percent of accused witches were women (Breuer 2009: 138; Klaits 1985: 52; Stephens 2002: 3), though percentages vary by date and region. Joseph Klaits notes that in parts of sixteenth-century England, Switzerland, and (what is now) Belgium, women accounted for over nine-of-ten victims (1985: 52), while Valerie Kivelson highlights that in seventeenth-century Muscovite Russia seven-of-

ten accused witches were in fact men (2001: 75). The large female-over-male ratio, however, was the norm in both Central and Western Europe (Broedel 2003: 167).²

The European witch-hunts arose from a number of interlocking societal factors, including both popular practices, regional and national politics, and ecclesiastical and theological discourses. I concentrate primarily on the theological discourses since it is in these that demonology is foregrounded. It is impossible to truly separate these discourses, however. While Frans Ilkka Mäyrä, for example, has divided demonological discourses into two variants, (i) scholastic, theological and academic considerations of scriptural sources, and (ii) quotidian demonology including folktales and local superstitions (1999: 23–52), such a division bears little resemblance to how demonologies have historically operated. Indeed, they often emerge through attempts to reconcile these variants. As Hans Peter Broedel's *The Malleus Maleficarum and the Construction of Witchcraft* (2003) and Michael Bailey's study of reformist theologian Johannes Nider, *Battling Demons* (2003: 141), explore, a key task of witchcraft theologians was to reinscribe popular beliefs and practices in Christian theological paradigms. This frequently entailed a demonologisation of practices, including folk magic, charms, and healing, that in popular contexts were not necessarily seen as demonic prior to their recoding by these 'elite' discourses and subsequent dissemination through practices such as preaching. This interaction is important in understanding the socio-cultural operations of demonology, revealing the unstable pliability of pre-existing theological frameworks: reacting to external factors, the structures of demonology mutated in response and redeployed those alien factors in service to its hermeneutic. This movement of reaction and reinscription, however, reveals the underlying instabilities of those demonological discourses.

² The reasons for this ratio are multiple and have been analysed in accordance with both theological-clerical and social factors. Several scholars note the often-violently misogynistic language utilised in the witch-hunting manuals, hinging on alignments of women with demologico-political concepts of physicality and deceit (S. Clark 1997: 136–53; 2001; Llewellyn Barstow 2001; Stephens 2002). The *Malleus*, perhaps the most infamous text, notes that women are 'more given to fleshly lusts' than men, as can be discerned from their 'many acts of carnal filthiness' (2007: 75). Meanwhile, French jurist Jean Bodin's *On the Demon-Mania of Witches* (1580) refers to women's 'bestial appetite' (1995: 169) and 'impotent nature' which 'burns with an incredible appetite for vengeance' (*ibid.*: 200), and James VI/I's *Demonology* contains a digression noting that Satan is 'friendlier with that sex' since Eve's temptation, accounting for why 'twenty women [are] given to that craft' for each man (2011: 128). Other scholars have highlighted the lived reality, such as how traditional 'women's work' like cooking, healing and midwifery made women more susceptible to accusations (Levack 2006: 141–65), and how it played into fears of women's (and peasants' generally) social mobility (Brauner 1995: 42).

Darkness and Silence: Recent Scholarship on Demonologies of Witchcraft

While a large body of scholarship on the witch-hunts had been produced in the latter half of the twentieth century, the millennium saw the publication of several high-profile monographs analysing early modern witchcraft demonologies. Alongside the studies by Broedel and Bailey, these included Stuart Clark's monumental *Thinking with Demons* (1997), the English translation of Michel de Certeau's *The Possession at Loudun* (2000), Armando Maggi's *Satan's Rhetoric* (2001), Walter Stephens' *Demon Lovers* (2002), Charles Zika's *Exorcising Our Demons* (2003), and Lyndal Roper's *Witch Craze* (2004). These were later joined by the English translation of Alain Boureau's 2004 *Satan the Heretic* (2006), Maggi's *In the Company of Demons* (2008), Laura Stokes' *Demons of Urban Reform* (2011), and, just recently, Virginia Krause's *Witchcraft, Demonology, and Confession in Early Modern France* (2015), among others (Goodare 2013; Levack 2006, 2013; Pearl 1999; Rowlands 2003, 2009; Thurston 2007; Waite 2003, 2007). While several of these texts integrate aspects of discourse analysis (S. Clark 1997; Krause 2015; Maggi 2001; Stephens 2002), most of these works are localised histories of persecutions. All, however, explore discursive commonalities in witchcraft theologies broadly and the ways localised incidents fit into and exceeded both those theological discourses and modern scholarly consensus regarding the persecutions and their position in European history.

Although (in)famously codified in the 1487 *Malleus Maleficarum*, the discursive foundations of the construction of the witch began much earlier. Stokes (2011) explores antecedents in trials and theological demonology already present by the 1440s, however, both Boureau (2006) and Isabel Iribarren (2007) have traced the fixation on the satanic pact, which I return to below, to a 1320 consultation on the heretical status of black magic organised by Pope John XXII. This consultation laid the doctrinal foundations for the reformulation of black magic—heretofore a matter largely of personal imprudence—as a species of heretical societal contagion. This reclassification was noteworthy and possessed far-reaching consequences. As Iribarren (2007: 40) details, John XII's proposition to establish magical practice as heretical

signified a rupture with centuries of Christian tradition whereby heresy, as an error in the faith, was a matter of intellectual choice (*haeresis*) with no immediate relation to practice. Black magic and the performance of pagan rituals, on the other hand, were normally divorced from their religious context and did not necessarily result in doctrinal error. Indeed, the ancient Church had sought to minimize the importance of such practices.

The blurring of lines between heretical belief and magical praxis laid the foundations for the witch-hunts, forming significant parts for the doctrinal grounding of Kramer's *Malleus* (Boureau 2006: 64; Iribarren 2007: 41). It opened up heresy as something that could exceed the mind of heretics and be potentially imposed on others: 'the victims and accomplices of the evil work were no longer...the little old credulous ones,' Boureau writes, 'but all human beings in their fragile and porous constitution and in their openness to the supernatural' (2006: 201).

While this doctrinal shift laid the theoretical foundation, however, the figure of the 'witch' as locus of this 'fragile and porous' condition emerged later, becoming gradually reified throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Ultimately, she—for the witch was a highly feminised image of evil—embodied a relatively fixed set of attributes, which Stokes terms the 'witch doctrine' (2011: 10). The central features of this doctrine were

the idea of the diabolic witch [as one] who had forged a pact with the Devil and sealed it with her flesh, who flew through the night to the witches' Sabbath, was the sworn enemy of ordinary society, and together with an invisible legion of other witches exercised her undying malice through individual acts of evil magic (*ibid.*).

The parts of this doctrine that I wish to concentrate on are the first, third, and fourth: the witch as satanic pact-holder, enemy of societal order, who works in collusion with others through operations of demonic magic. Bailey summarises this model pithily as the idea of 'a secret cultic army organized by Satan and wholly in his service' that was 'a threat to the entire Christian faith' (2003: 119). Noting the discursive construction of the witch through its opposition to (true) Christianity, Clark (1997: 9) clarifies this relation via recourse to Forsyth's understanding of Satan's narrative function:

Witchcraft was construed dialectically in terms of what it was not; what was significant about it was not its substance but the system of oppositions that it established and fulfilled. The witch—like Satan himself—could only be a contingent being, always "a function of another, not an independent entity."

The 'witch' is therefore discursively created as a demonological other to the true community of Christianity, one whose invisibility was a constitutive part of its threat—indeed, for all their conflicts in the wake of the Reformation, Catholics and Protestants accused fellow members of their confessions of witchcraft more than each other (Bailey 2003: 146; Levack 2006: 109–33). The witch was a counterfeit (passing for) Christian, and witchcraft discursively embodied an 'anti-religion', a parody of (true) Christianity that paradoxically testified to the truth of the very thing it parodied. Clark (1997: 84–5) points to this structural inversion by juxtaposing the structures of belief and practice that witchcraft was seen as reversing:

The demonic pact was obviously parasitic on baptism, and the agreement it enshrined on God's covenant with the Church...The demonic mark could be construed as an imitation of circumcision...the sign of the cross...[or] the holy stigmata. The magic arts copied providential powers...[And it] was often argued that demonic possession was modelled on the incarnation, with the devil attempting to debase humanity, as much as Christ had elevated it, by clothing himself in its form.

This inversion was absolute: 'Witchcraft had all the appearance of a proper religion but in reality it was religion perverted. And since genuine religion was, in theory, a total experience, so its demonic copy was all-embracing' (*ibid.*: 82): a counterfeit totality.

The performance of black magic (*maleficium*) was central to how witches were constructed as opposing public order. Bailey notes that this active element differentiated witches from other heresies whose errors were mainly of belief: the witch, as a sworn agent of Satan, actively worked to undermine Christendom and her practising of *maleficium* made her substantively more threatening (2003: 142–3). *Maleficium* could manifest in several forms, including crop failure, strange weather conditions, death or illness (*ibid.*: 137). The relationship between witchcraft and other heresies—those of Waldensians, Beghards, Hussites, among others—is complex.³ While it was common in some regions to equate specific heretical movements with witches, and witchcraft *was* a heresy, its discursively constructed relationship to *maleficium* coded it as an active force of societal destabilisation as opposed to an

³ The nature of and relationship between heretical movements is complicated and not directly relevant to this thesis. For further information on the changing role of heresies see Hunter, Laursen and Nederman's edited collection *Heresy in Transition* (2005). Most works on early modern witchcraft discourses will entail some analysis of the points of joining and deviation between witchcraft and heresy; see especially Bailey (2003) and Waite (2003).

error of belief that might be recanted (*ibid.*: 129). Witchcraft was not just a heresy, but also marked participation in a hidden network operating within Christendom to orchestrate its downfall. It was a heretical contagion, the witch was its vector, and its victims could be infected irrespective of personal beliefs.

The hiddenness of witchcraft is a core element, and is the focus of Stephens' *Demon Lovers* (2002), and, recently, Virginia Krause's *Witchcraft, Demonology, and Confession* (2015). Building on observations of her earlier work that 'a silent or otherwise resistant person'—that is, in Ahmedian terms, a wilful subject—'is [often seen as] even *more* guilty than a defendant who confesses easily' (2003: 333), Krause explores the 'science of the night' of early modern French demonology, in which demonological truths were coded as always obscured and mostly invisible to the demonologists, 'who cannot directly witness the sabbat, who cannot observe with their own eyes the witch's evil deeds of her secret interactions with demons during the night, the time when the devil moves more freely among us' (2015: 48). Witchcraft was 'a crime committed in the darkness of an impenetrable night' which could not, demonologists insisted, 'be rooted out without recourse to exceptional measure' (*ibid.*). This lack of visibility, Krause claims, leads to an 'auricular regime' of confession or testimony as solidifying the reality of demons: hearing supplants vision as empirical evidence of truth. Stephens takes a similar line, but designates touch as the guarantor of demonological reality. Focusing on the idea of the 'demon lover' in clerical treatises and trial records, Stephens frames the often-lurid detail with which the witch-hunters documented the women's sexual relations with demons as marking not only their own prurience but revealing an underlying anxiety regarding the existence of demons and, through demons, of God—for there could be no surer proof of a 'divinity that shapes our ends' than demonic opposition to that divinity (2002: 346).⁴ For Stephens, this underlying anxiety leads to fixation on proving demonic corporeality, present most dramatically in the demon lover but also in acts like the physical desecration of the sacramental host (*ibid.*: 210). At best, however,

⁴ There are issues with Stephens' work regarding his downplaying of the role of misogyny as having a role in the persecutions, which often seems to undermine his own argument. Judging by Stephens' own understandings of misogyny as outlined in his introduction (2002: 1–12), this dismissal seems to stem from a misunderstanding that misogyny is always an active attitude and not an underlying mentality: that is, that for misogyny to be a major factor it must have been an active motive of the witch-hunters, rather than an attitude uncritically derived from their religio-cultural contexts.

these reasonings could only cling to the double negation that demons were not *not* existent (*ibid.*: 355).⁵

The ‘hiddenness’ of witchcraft discourses point to the structural relationship posited by Clark that testifies to its existence as a self-consolidating other. This is not to say that the witch-hunters, theologians and jurists did not fear the reality of demons and their human agents—that witchcraft was not believed to be true—but rather that witchcraft served a discursive function by justifying the very structures that hunted it and the (theo)logics that underlay them. The posited existence of heretical networks of demonological witchcraft legitimised the hierarchies that existed to thwart them, yet by their dissimulation served to undermine those structures. This structural nature of demonic witchcraft also relates to another strand of witchcraft scholarship that sees the discourse as having a formative role in the rise of the nation-state.

Statecraft and Witchcraft, Centres and Peripheries

The concept of heretical networks of demonic agents (‘witches’) whose allegiance to Satan meant they worked to divert God’s creation ties into scholarship on the relation between the witch-hunts and the rise of the nation-state. This connection emerged in witchcraft scholarship during the 1980s, notably with the work of Scottish sociologist Christina Lerner (1984: 79–91; 2000 [1981]). The connection between the nascent state to the witch-hunts is also explored by Joseph Klaits, who notes the rise of state torture as a form of control (1985: 151). Certain specifics notwithstanding, this position has become relatively uncontroversial. Witchcraft was tried predominantly in secular courts as a secular crime, overlapping or even conflated with conspiracy or treason (Levack 2006: 88), and as Valerie Kivelson notes, the idea that ‘witches served as convenient targets for establishing the authority and jurisdiction of the growing nation-states in the early modern period’ is now part of scholarly consensus (2001: 79)—albeit not necessarily as the core factor in the persecutions. Wolfgang Behringer (1997) importantly notes in his study of Bavarian witch-hunts that

⁵ Related, but perhaps at times opposed, to these analyses are Armando Maggi’s explorations of the figuration of demonic bodies in Renaissance Italy in *In the Company of Demons* (2008). In this text, Maggi explores how demonic form was understood as metaphor—since demons were believed to be made of air, lacking physical form, the quasi-bodies they manifested were understood as akin to linguistic signs intended to convey meaning.

persecutions tended only to proliferate when the authorities and populace aligned, often prompted by phenomena like recurrent famine, harsh climatic conditions, or the spread of disease. In response to such events, to appropriate Michel de Certeau's words about the trial of Urbain Grandier after the 1634 possessions at Loudun: 'In order to create the cohesion of a cosmos, a divided and troubled society created a "deviant" and sacrificed him to itself' (2000: 191).

Brian Levack (1996) identifies four main threads in scholarship relating the witch-hunts to the rise of the nation-state: (1) the centralisation of royal/state authority, which leads to an attack on localism or particularism, (2) the officialisation of judicial power and its enhancement by inquisitorial torture methods, (3) state efforts to reform society into a 'godly community' via the 'acculturation of the rural' by a centralised, hierarchical authority, and (4) the growing separation of church and state, for which witchcraft-as-treason became a key area of cooperation between the bodies. While all of these are important to the analysis of the politics of demonology, the last requires specific attention. As Levack (*ibid.*: 98) summarises:

[T]he crime of witchcraft was often viewed as treason against God on the one hand and an act of rebellion against the state on the other. The identification of secular and religious crime was deliberate: the state prosecuted witches...in order to legitimise new regimes through the pursuit of religious dissidents.

This idea of treason-political-and-spiritual was frequently figured through discourses of the satanic pact, constructed as an inversion of both baptism and the Eucharist (Boureau 2006: 61–2; S. Clark 1997: 83). In addition to desecrating sacraments, however, it was also a twisted reflection of feudal oaths of fealty, in which the Devil adopted the position of 'liege lord' providing protection to those under him (Boureau 2006: 67–92). This relationship was somewhat ironic, Russell notes, since the Devil's original crime had been rebellion against his own (1986: 169).

One narrative that could be constructed is that of the imposition of centralised state authority over networks of rebellious heretics; however, reality was more complicated. Levack, for example, has noted that the main forces in the persecution of witches were not centralised authorities but local ones—they sought sanction from central authorities but were not their direct agents; indeed, central powers often hampered their efforts more than abetting them (2006: 85–90). Robert Thurston,

however, argues that one of the primary reasons for this hampering was—alongside the growth of elite scepticism—that as the witch-hunts grew more erratic, requiring increasing judicial time and expense, they began to disrupt regional governance (2007: 269). Relatedly, Johannes Dillinger has argued that the cementing of the nation-state was actually enacted partly through cessation of the hunts, arguing that ‘the territorial state’s larger principle of spatial order conquered the communal concentration on local space’ (2009: 199). He continues (*ibid.*):

The witch hunts, as serious abuses of the judiciary, provoked a reaction from the territorial sovereign. The trials became obvious and convenient targets for criticism. Thus...the witch hunts themselves did not serve as a vehicle for a policy of acculturation or indoctrination on the part of the religious and secular authorities. Rather, the apparatus of central government gained significant ground by controlling, limiting, and finally ending the witch hunts.

In this reading, the state’s consolidation eventually came through the suppression of the hunts rather than the witches. An event that codifies this transition was the 1634 possession at Loudun, France, expertly analysed by Michel de Certeau (2000). Centring on the possession of a group of Ursuline nuns and ending with the execution of the priest Urbain Grandier—the ‘sorcerer’—Loudun served as a battlefield for three competing discourses—exorcists trying to reassert the laws of traditional demonology, doctors hoping to prove the truth of the discourse of medicine as an explanation for possession, and the juridical authority of the French state seeking to cement its power over what it saw as rebellious regional authorities. The victor, to appropriate Bruce Lincoln’s words on Darius the Great, would have ‘the opportunity to assert the “truth”...that is, to control the historical record’ (2007: 9).

Nonetheless, while local authorities enacted the most vehement hunts, the discourse of demonological witchcraft originated from the upper echelons of society—via the reconfiguration of popular belief and praxis through the framework of established theology, which was then disseminated back to the populace, notably via preaching (Levack 2006: 109–30, 178). As I will explore in the following chapter, in the (theo)political theories of Bodin and Hobbes, the demonological witch is opposed to the singular authority of the sovereign, threatening to undermine him. That the centralised state might have been instrumental in ending the witch-hunts does not undermine the theological and narrative structuration of demonological witchcraft as

other to an authentic Christian community figured as archetype of the body politic. The increasing erraticism of the hunts can also be construed as an effect of the witch's (in)visibility: the 'science of the night' could not pierce the darkness, evoking greater fear and necessitating greater inquisition. Cynthia Eller and Elizabeth Reis note that witchcraft persecutions often arose from the need to restore an idealised status quo with neatly demarcated social boundaries (1998: 792), and this may be partially true. However, the witch's inscrutable darkness meant that those boundaries could never be made stable: the counterfeit could always be present, occulted amongst true believers.

The Devastating Syllogism

The concept of witches as heretical networks aiming to pervert God's creation remained a feature of European life until the seventeenth century, though it waxed and waned in popularity. Yet the idea of Satan as capable of diverting proper history remains. Writing on contemporary discourses of demons, Christopher Partridge, notes that 'Individual events and disturbances experienced on the plane of history are, on the one hand, understood as particularised demonic activity and, on the other, are projected into eternity, being fundamentally related to cosmic principalities and powers and the satanic attempt to thwart God's ultimate, salvific purpose' (2006: 13).

Constructions of political-spiritual thwarting tie into one final work on early modern demonology that requires commentary: Armando Maggi's *Satan's Rhetoric* (2001). Maggi's text explores the theological figuration of demonic speech as a 'silent idiom of solitude and devastation' that works psychically to recall humanity to our shared status as pariah, 'our existence as perennial exiles' from paradise (2001: 2, 255). Demons spoke into the mind, and their recalling of our exile led to alienation and depression. Maggi's work blends history, psychoanalysis, and phenomenology in order to explore the repercussions of demonic language, which was differentiated from that of angels due to its ability to distort moral-ontological order. While angelic communication relied on direct and unambiguous relaying of the divine will, demons spoke language in its material ambiguity, only with world-changing or world-ending repercussions. The devil, Maggi elaborates, devours humankind by means of acolytes who 'with words deny the true God'—a collective mode of linguistic expression that threatens to dissolve and consume legitimate order. This demonic 'devouring idiom'

is predicated upon a fundamental premise: to speak the devil's language *is* as well as *means* to devour the creation (men's bodies and souls, their cattle). The good angels' language is a nonlanguage in that its speakers simply voice the Divinity's will by means of human signifying sounds. The devil's language is spoken by three categories of speakers: the devils themselves, the witches (along with sodomites and Jews), and those human beings who have been corrupted/devoured by this very language (*ibid.*: 24–5).⁶

Maggi notes a key distinction between speakers: the devil and witches were 'native speakers' of this idiom, whereas the merely corrupted were not (*ibid.*), a relation that constructs ontological differences between people. There are those who by either nature or conscious affiliation distort and destroy God's creation, and those that are victims of this distortion. However, without human interpellators the Devil 'cannot fulfill his devastating syllogism'—his idiom is 'first and foremost a social occurrence'—and to 'complete his syllogism,' Maggi notes, 'the devil may need the support of his disciples, witches, magicians, sodomites, heretics, and Jews' (*ibid.*: 26, 233). The 'language of Satan...is a fire that devours both its listeners and its speakers' (*ibid.*), and to be a 'native speaker' of Satan's rhetoric is to speak the silent inferno that threatens to consume all of creation as 'God's rule'. That is, as orthotaxy.

Mastery begins with the power of naming. As this section outlines, the name 'witch' (and discursively related designators like 'sodomite' or 'Jew') constructed the named as part of a demonic conspiracy aimed at destroying Christianity from within. In order to safeguard Christianity—to secure the health, safety and continued existence of the body, personal, political, social, spiritual—the witch (and the Jew) had to be destroyed. The discourses of demonology presume a correct course, for the individual and history, which demons aim to distort or destroy. In demonological witchcraft discourses they gain human agents to assist this project—to complete the 'devastating syllogism' that destroys creation through the denial of its creator. These are themes that, strikingly, recur in the case studies I undertake below, despite their temporal and geographical distance from the witchcraft persecutions. My analysis of these contemporary demonologies draws on frameworks and observations developed in the recent scholarly evaluations of witchcraft demonologies I have examined here,

⁶ In the early modern context 'sodomy' did not just refer to homosexuality but also to a large number of perceived sexual deviances, including bestiality, 'unnatural' intercourse between men and women, and even by analogy a host of non-sexual sins (Stokes 2011: 154–73).

by situating them within their ideological matrices and teasing out their connections to other socio-cultural fantasies and fears. Before this, however, I will explore the scholarship that outlines shifts in demonology that occurred beyond the witch-hunts. Notions of occult networks of satanic allies continued to have resonance beyond the hunts, and the European Enlightenment brought more revolutionary reconfigurations of the demonological tradition.

A PROTEAN POST-ENLIGHTENMENT

The history of demonology after the European Enlightenment marks either its irrelevancy or its radical transformation. When Charles Baudelaire had a preacher proclaim in ‘The Generous Gambler’ (1869) that ‘one of the devil’s best ruses is to persuade you that he doesn’t exist’ (1970: 61), he points toward this ambiguity. Philip Almond’s new biography of Satan, for example, ends at the Enlightenment, which he claims saw Satan and his legions ‘effectively eliminated’ from ‘liberal’ Christianities (2014: 221) only to return in filmic form in 1973 with *The Exorcist*—part of a popular re-engagement with the supernatural that continues today (*ibid.*: xiii–xiv). However, there is a life between these poles, painted with fiction and polyvalent appropriations. While, as Lincoln (2009: 45; 2012: 31) and others (Minerva 2001: 374–77; Schock 2003: 12–17) accurately claim, demonology was increasingly discredited by rationalist critiques of religion, its mainline marginalisation heralded new beginnings.

There are two threads to post-Enlightenment demonology that are inextricable from its politicality. The first is its more-traditional use as symbol of worldly evil, closely linked to the early modern witch-networks, which recurs in both ‘traditional’ apocalyptic religiosities and growing paradigms of ‘conspiracy theory’ (Barkun 2013; Boyer 1992; Landes 2011). The second is a legacy of symbolic appropriation of satanic imagery as religio-political protest. This latter trajectory mostly stems from Romantic (mis)readings of John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (Bloom 2005; Forsyth 2003; Schock 2003; Wolfson 2004), but also encompasses esoteric groups like Theosophy, Decadent movements, and projects of socialism and women’s liberation throughout

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Faxneld 2012, 2013a, 2014).⁷ It would be inaccurate to view these trends as wholly separate, however—they condition one another in complex, multifaceted patterns of collusion and competition. Later parts of this thesis unpack this dynamic of interrelation and interpellation, and my discussion here will thus serve to highlight in preliminary form some of its core features and historical progression by outlining prior scholarship on these topics.

Architect of Evil to Archetype of Rebellion: Satanisms, Romantic and Symbolic

One of the earliest and most prominent religio-political appropriations of Satan takes place in the phenomenon that has been termed ‘Romantic Satanism’, a movement that mainly arose in England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Taking point from reconfigurations of Milton’s portrayal of Satan in *Paradise Lost*, this intellectual milieu appropriated the Devil as an ally and symbol of self-identification against what it saw as an oppressive monolithic system. Susan Wolfson (2004: 120) summarises the phenomenon as a

line of sympathy that refused to see the Satan of *Paradise Lost* only, or even, as the architect of evil. Many Romantic-era readers...saw in Satan’s language a poetry of imaginative, principled critique, subjective anguish, exile, and alienation: in sum, modern consciousness.

In Romantic Satanism, the Devil’s negative qualities are, while not wholly minimised, increasingly paired with noble ones. Shelley listed his ‘taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandisement’ alongside his ‘courage and majesty and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force’ (in Schock 2003: 39), while William Hazlitt described Satan as a figure ‘gigantic, irregular, portentous, uneasy, and disturbed—but dazzling in its faded splendour, the clouded ruins of a god’ (in *ibid.*: 10). Peter Schock (2003: 39) makes the uncertainty of Satan’s new conceptualisation clear:

While Satan is re-envisioned as the image of expanding human consciousness and desire, rebelling against oppression and limitation, he also comes into view as a fallen figure who loses Paradise in an attempt to locate the divine source within, whose rebelliousness may turn tyrannical

⁷ This latter trajectory continues today, not merely in fictional form but in the actual creation of ‘Satanist’ religious groups founded around principles of ‘autonomy, antinomianism, and liberation’ (Petersen 2014: 400). This thesis does not address these movements, but academic analyses can be found in the edited volumes by Petersen (2009) and Faxneld and Petersen (2013).

and revengeful in his authoritarian reign in hell...[He] emerges as an unstable figure: in many contexts he appears as an heroic apotheosis of human consciousness and libertarian desire, while in others he constitutes the dark double of Prometheus.

The reconception occurred fairly quickly after *Paradise Lost*'s publication. As Per Faxneld notes, Milton had been an active republican pamphleteer during the civil war and Oliver Cromwell's private secretary; this 'soon lead to speculation whether Satan's rebellion against God...was perhaps an allegory for the republican uprising against the king' (2012: 529). This heroising of Satan was not commonplace, however—if employed politically, Satan was more often used in traditional symbolic strategies of demonisation. It did, however, leave a legacy in literary and popular culture (Craciun 2003; Faxneld 2014; Forsyth 2003; O'Donnell 2015a; Schock 2003), one recent expression of which is Philip Pullman's bestselling *His Dark Materials* trilogy (1995–2000).

Exhibited mainly in works of English Romanticism, most infamously those of Blake, Byron, Shelley, Wollstonecraft, and Wordsworth (Craciun 2003; Schock 2003), as well as on mainland Europe in those of Carducci, Baudelaire, Michelet, de Vigny, and Sand (Faxneld 2013a, 2013b; Luijk 2013), the discourse of Romantic Satanism recast the fallen angel from hubristic traitor to revolutionary hero. While many Enlightenment thinkers outright rejected the Devil as a part of dogmatic religion, Romantic Satanism appropriated and adapted aspects of his Christian mythic use to fit into new religio-political agendas aimed at challenging the status quo (Faxneld 2013a; Luijk 2013). As such, Satan was transformed into a polyvalent symbol whose functions extended beyond his authorship of evil and ranged from explorations of, in the words of Peter Schock, 'metaphysical rebellion, ethical transvaluation, and political revolution; to dramatizing human psychology [and] producing such literary effect as irony or satire' (1992: 507). Van Luijk refers to this new face of the Devil as the 'archetypal embodiment of rebellion' (2013: 45).

The definitive work on this milieu is Schock's *Romantic Satanism* (2003), which traces the gradual alterations in cultural attitudes to Satan's depiction and characterisation—one of the most striking being changes to engravings for *Paradise Lost* itself, in which the Devil progressively loses bestial traits like bat-wings or cloven hooves in favour of a portrayal as fully- or mostly-human, often as a muscular

blond male (*ibid.*: 26–34).⁸ Alongside various analyses of the apocalyptic and demonic imagery used by the Romantics (Ahearn 1996; Bloom 2005; Craciun 2003; Forsyth 2003), Schock has recently been joined by others analysing religio-political deployments of ‘symbolic Satanism’ in post-Enlightenment Europe (Faxneld 2012, 2013a, 2014; Häll 2013; Luijk 2013). Building on earlier work by Adriana Craciun (2003) and Valentin Boss (1991), Per Faxneld sits in the vanguard of this new scholarship, with his monumental *Satanic Feminism* (2014) and related articles (2012, 2013a) exploring strategic uses of satanic symbolism in esoteric and political discourses of women’s liberation and other socialist movements during the nineteenth century. Such discourses often relied on a counter-reading of the Biblical text, reinscribing images for new purposes—Eve’s role in the fall became a positive political injunction and the witch was reconfigured as a ‘proto-suffragette ancestress’, her black masses symbolic protests against patriarchal power; meanwhile, Satan and the related *topoi* of the demon lover became reinscribed as allies against religious patriarchal oppression, and sometimes Satan was refigured as woman to complete the gesture of symbolic opposition (2014: 663–7). A similar deployment was made in other radical political circles, such as socialist or anarchist writers like Godwin, Bakunin, and Proudhon, who used Satan as a symbol of opposition to the old orders. In ways, we see in these Biblical counter-readings the realisation of the fears of demonological witchcraft—the actual emergence of ‘heretical networks’ dedicated to an end to ‘legitimate’ order. While the usage of Satan was symbolic, ironic and deliberately provocative rather than an expression of faith, the symbolism had a clear ideological aim. As Romans 13:1–2 reads, ‘For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves’. And, as Faxneld quips, ‘who would logically be the great adversary of God’s ordinance? Satan, of course’ (2013a: 553).

Reinscriptions of Satan as righteous revolutionary ran alongside demonisation by authorities, using the same satanic imagery in more typical fashion to name social

⁸ That the Devil’s humanisation was visually marked by his Europeanisation is noteworthy given the figure’s historical impositions onto the marginalised. As the Devil becomes less ‘evil’ he thus also becomes increasingly white and archetypally masculine.

evil. However, as governments became more secularised such ‘symbolic Satanism’ became less of a public concern—and accordingly lost some of its rhetorical impact (Faxneld 2014: 670). Even groups that had formerly used satanic imagery phased it out as they drew close to real political power (Faxneld 2013a). Condemnation became increasingly concentrated to more conservative circles. Nonetheless, while the steady vanishment of demonology from mainline theology allowed its reinscription as a sign able to signify both good and evil, for conservative Christians who looked at society and saw the erosion of authentic religion it perhaps marked something different—that Satan’s greatest trick really had been convincing the world he didn’t exist. This led to new structures of critique of the social order, perhaps a reinscription of the ‘science of the night’ identified by Krause: a fixation on hidden forces whose existence could be uncovered by careful, inquisitorial excavation.

(In)Visible Ubiquity: Conspiracy Theory—Night Science, Hermetic History

In his article on ‘Satanism’ in the 1908 *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, E. Sidney Hartland (1908) describes two types of Satanists: a ‘mad cult’ of ‘scattered associations or isolated persons’, worshipping Satan as fallen archangel and enemy of God, and ‘Luciferians and Palladists’, a group that worshipped Lucifer as the god of light and which ultimately was founded on a ‘dualistic philosophy and was a sort of topsy-turvy Christianity’ (*ibid.*: 203). Both types are alleged to be present in Europe and America in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, but it is the latter—the Palladists—with which Hartland’s article is concerned. Revealed by a dissenting ex-conspirator ‘Leo Taxil’ and his associates in 1887, the Palladium—a globe-spanning Masonic-Satanist conspiracy—gripped the French imagination. Hartland reports that several high-profile members of the Catholic Church blessed a campaign against the conspiracy. The conspiracy’s attraction in Catholic circles was aided by the earlier 1884 encyclical by Pope Leo XIII, *Humanum genus*, which had accused Masons of working to establish the Kingdom of Satan (Korey 1995: 63), and in 1896 the city of Trent hosted an Antimasonic Conference to give the ‘final blow to Freemasonry and Protestantism’ (Hartland 1908: 205). As it reached fever pitch, however, the Palladist conspiracy came to an abrupt end. Later in 1896, Taxil revealed the whole thing as a hoax. Ultimately, he thanked the Catholic press and bishops for the assistance they

had given him in organising ‘the finest mystification of all, which was the crown of his career’ (*ibid.*: 206).

The Palladium was therefore shown to be an elaborate, decade-long hoax. However, the cultural force of its vision of hidden, satanic order was neither new nor did it fade away. Over a century earlier, the Order of the Illuminati—a short-lived late eighteenth-century Bavarian secret society dedicated to spreading the secular, rationalistic ideas of the Enlightenment—had passed into popular myth as hub of conspiratorial attempts to undermine Christendom. Outlawed and suppressed in 1784, the Illuminati adopted a similar cultural position to demonological witches. As Jeffrey Pasley (2003: 336) outlines:

the embattled defenders of church and king came to see the Illuminati as both representatives of, and the prime movers behind, all the insidious forces of innovation, free thought, and revolution that seemed to threaten their world.

The first totalising Illuminati conspiracies were outlined by French Jesuit Augustin Barruel and University of Edinburgh scientist John Robison in 1797 and 1798, respectively (Waterman 2005: 17). Both posited the Illuminati’s hand in the French Revolution, and warned that their next target was America—leading to a full-blown Illuminati panic in New England in 1798, in which both texts were often cited (Pasley 2003: 337–8). The idea of demonic Illuminati in the US was popularised by Timothy Dwight, one of the period’s most influential preachers and president of Yale College, who identified the Illuminati as responsible for both the French Revolution and the spread of Deism (Poole 2009: 25).

Whether more or less satanic, the Illuminati had immense cultural longevity. As scholars of conspiracy theory like Michael Barkun (2013) and Peter Knight (2008) detail, the Illuminati became a mainstay of post-1960s conspiracy culture. While not always linked (explicitly) to Satan, they still operate as an enduring cultural symbol of the nefarious, shadowy organisation working to bring the world under control, a *topos* now almost omnipresent in conspiracy subcultures (Barkun 2013: 136–9). The Illuminati’s ‘history’ in the nineteenth-century is less clear, however, and the role of the Palladium in perhaps resurrecting popular ideas of demonic conspiracy has not

been examined.⁹ More attention has understandably been paid to the 1903 antisemitic forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Like the encyclical of Leo XIII, the *Protocols* posited a global ‘Jewish-Masonic’ conspiracy for world domination, becoming a key text in twentieth-century antisemitic discourses in both the West and Muslim world (D. Cook 2005; Filiu 2011; Korey 1995; Webman 2010).

There are a number of features of this conspiracist discourse that are relevant. First, like in forms of Romantic Satanism, Illuminati conspiracies closely linked their images of Satan to secular opposition to religion. Second, conspiracies were construed as transnational, encompassing the French Revolution and American colonial politics, among others. These early conspiracy theories served as a hermeneutical framework by which individuals like Robison, Barruel, and Dwight could rationalise the growing popularity and political power of secular or ‘weak’ religious paradigms. Given these features, it is maybe unsurprising that a significant part of late-twentieth and twenty-first century millenarian or apocalyptic beliefs have significant conspiracist elements. Addressing conspiracism has accordingly become a core facet of studies of twentieth-century apocalyptic beliefs (Fuller 1994; O’Leary 1995; Wójcik 1996, 1997). Conspiracism is not identical to apocalypticism, however, although it bears familial resemblances. These two discourses, especially in the information age, feed off and into one another, a relationship expertly charted by political theorist Michael Barkun (1986, 1994, 2000, 2003, 2013).¹⁰

The core structural similarity between conspiracy theory (even in more secular forms) and apocalypticism lies in its attempt to discern the nature and working of evil (Barkun 2013; Fenster 2008: 197–232; O’Leary 1995; Wójcik 1997). Citing Stephen O’Leary, Barkun (2013: 3) writes:

At their broadest, conspiracy theories ‘view history as controlled by massive, demonic forces.’ The locus of this evil lies outside the true community, in some ‘Other, defined as foreign or barbarian, though often...disguised as innocent and upright.’ The result is a worldview characterized by a sharp division between the realms of good and evil.

⁹ There is a general dearth of scholarship on the Palladist hoax, although it has recently gained some scholarly attention by David Harvey (2008) and Robert Ziegler (2012: 50–73).

¹⁰ Other prominent scholars of conspiracy theory include Mark Fenster (2008), Timothy Melley (2000, 2008), Jack Bratich (2008), Lance deHaven-Smith (2013; deHaven-Smith and Witt 2012), and Peter Knight (2000, 2003, 2008).

While apocalyptic beliefs are often complex (and not always coherent) composites of scriptural exegeses and contemporary political realities, conspiracy theories tend to be more overtly syncretistic, drawing not just on classical apocalyptic texts but also on ideas adapted from New Age spiritualities, ‘ufology’, alternative histories, and even texts from other living religions (Barkun 2013; Partridge 2004). Many texts analysed in this thesis rest in this milieu, which Barkun has characterised as utilising a model of Levi-Straussian *bricolage* to blend ‘stigmatised knowledges’—knowledge hidden from and/or disbelieved by mainstream society (2013: 15–38). The discernment of these occult knowledges becomes crucial to conspiracy believers; it both gives sense to a senseless world and permits a ground for opposition to that world (Fenster 2008: 141).

Brian Bennett has juxtaposed providential and conspiratorial views of history in describing both as ‘hermetic histories’ that are fundamentally divinatory in nature, trafficking in ‘recondite signs’ that call for interpretation. Yet while providentialism ‘seeks the “hand of God” in historical events both big and small’, conspiracism represents an ‘inverted providentiality’ that reveals not God’s hand, but the ‘hidden hand’ (2007: 175–6). This hidden hand is often posited as demonic in nature, whether figuratively or actually. Its workings must be investigated with inquisitorial precision, exposed and unravelled. Bennett concludes that providentialism and conspiracism are both historical discourses with a clear this-worldly focus, even if their histories are outward signs of unseen forces (*ibid.*: 198–9). However, while he is correct, this does not take into account the full nature of conspiracism’s ‘inverted providentiality’. In more religious conspiracism like those analysed in this thesis, methods often resemble prophecy exegesis, but conspiracists augment or even supplant scriptural sources with a focus on the interrogation of this-worldly phenomena: secret societies, historical and contemporary events, and (pseudo-)scientific theories are woven into hermeneutical frameworks for interpreting the historical process. By removing the external agent of history, conspiracism places itself wholly inside the immanent frame of secular order (see C. Taylor 2007). This immanence also frames ostensibly providential histories, like those I explore below. Even when God is still invoked, conspiracism’s ‘secular’ focus tends to diminish his potentiality. The recondite signs the religious conspiracist interprets point more to demonic action *within* history than a divine hand *beyond* it.

History becomes not the gradual unfolding of divine presence but of the absence of that presence: counterfeit history to a true teleology increasing differed and deferred.

INTO ‘THE “SENSELESS” MAZE’

Hybrids of secular and religious, conspiracist discourses might be construed as heirs of early modern witchcraft discourses. At least, they replicate particular key features: (i) a fixation on occlusion only discernible by inquisitorial methods, and (ii) a positing of diabolic networks of conspirators working (in)visibly to end society as we know it. Their efforts to synthesise stigmatised knowledges, mass media, political speeches and world events (past and present) into a ‘hermetic history’ are not dissimilar from how witch-hunters attempted to integrate popular magic and folk traditions into pre-existing theological frameworks. Both craft theologico-political narratives in order to fit what does or will not fit into their conceptions of an ordered cosmos. Both use a ‘science of the night’ to discern the obscure(d) and stop the ‘devastating syllogism’ that will devour creation. There is a crucial difference, however. While witches were thought to undermine the structures of society from its fringes, diabolical conspirators are themselves the architects of society and determine its structures. This belief often leads to the adoption of a millenarian or apocalyptic perspective. As Barkun remarks, given the choice is between ‘the despair of the virtuous weak, condemned to fighting rearguard actions’ that do little more than delay the inevitable, and ‘the hope of the millennialist who may appear weak at the moment but is confident of ultimate triumph’ the latter’s appeal is unsurprising (2013: 233). Either way, the conspiracist is reconfigured as noble heretic, battling to reassert truth in a world led astray, to unravel the illusions that mask the diabolical substrate of contemporary civilisation and (thereby) return to a pristine social order.

This final dualism—of a whole and holy individual against satanic society—is one of the central themes I explore in this thesis. It gestures to reconfigurations of sovereign order I unpack in the following chapters. In this chapter, I have surveyed the contemporary literature on demonology that explores the coding of demonological evil as ‘deviation’ from ‘God’s rule’. This chapter has focused on the figuration of

demonic deviation through the scholarship around the European witch-hunts, in which demons and their human allies were construed as striving to destroy Christian civilisation, and on the mutations of post-Enlightenment demonologies, in which that deviation becomes both a position of protest against that Christian civilisation and the hidden hand orchestrating its drift from its ordained trajectory. In these discourses, those (believed to be) siding with the demon are coded as choosing otherwise than the sovereign will, becoming wilful agents striving for the end of orthotaxy. However, the framework of religious conspiracism reinscribes the demonological networks that rose to the fore during the witchcraft persecutions. No longer did rogue individuals trouble the boundaries of the sacred political order—rather, a rogue political order troubled the boundaries of the sacred individual, whose theopolitical duty became the taming of this rogue leviathan—the restoration of an ‘ought’ over an ‘is’.

It is the theopolitics of this attempted restoration—the demons it summons in order to exorcise—that my thesis explores, as it continues to tread the paths of ‘the “senseless” maze of this folly called demonology’ (Maggi 2001: 3). To do so requires a winding back from our current time, however, in order to focus fully on the sovereign will, the ‘rule’ of ‘God’s rule’. The following chapter explores this core element of orthotaxy. It does so by exploring two classical theorists of (theo)political sovereignty, Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes, and their constructions of demonology as ultimate other to (all, true) political order.

CHAPTER TWO

I Will (Not) Serve

The Demonic and the Architecture of Sovereignty

Of all the many examples of failed ideological interpellation, the fall of the devil is undoubtedly the most extreme. Created to be the greatest of all angels, Satan instead turns against God, thereby becoming the figure of ultimate evil...[T]he divine performative that calls the devil into being has a concrete effect, but apparently not even God is in full control of the consequences of his performative acts. In fact, the bad subjects here have the opportunity to act in ways that influence the shape of the given order: in this case, causing the fall of humanity and triggering the Incarnation.

— Adam Kotsko (2008: 209, 224)

The persona of the Miltonic Satan is often encapsulated in the Latin phrase *non serviam*: ‘I will not serve’. Figured as a statement of autonomy and (thus also) of sovereignty, Georges Bataille calls it ‘the motto of the devil’ (in Connor 2014: 167): the ‘desire to accede to authentic being, to the *sovereignty* without which an individual or an action have no value in themselves, but are merely useful’ (1998: 120). The statement, notes Alasdair MacIntyre, ‘marks not merely a personal revolt against God, but a revolt against the concept of an ordained and unchangeable hierarchy’; yet it also contains a paradox, for Satan ‘both has to and cannot reject this hierarchy: the only alternative to service is monarchy; but monarchy implies the hierarchy which revolt rejects’ (1998: 97). This chapter explores this paradox as related to the relation between sovereignty and its demonological other. Curiously, the phrase *non serviam* does not appear in *Paradise Lost*. It is often used to thematically

summarise the (in)famous statement, ‘better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven’ (I.263), embodying the spirit of Satan’s monologue. It does, however, appear in the Vulgate translation of Jeremiah 2:20, which laments Israel’s apostasy and allegorises wayward Israelites as a wild vine grown out of control, prostituting themselves before idols and rejecting the Lord.¹

In its biblical context, ‘*non serviam*’ is thus not the declaration of a being’s autonomy but an erroneous, hubristic attitude projected onto an errant subject as part of a litany of condemnations. It refers not to a revolutionary archangel but to humans who have foolishly rejected the rule of their sovereign god. As a Vulgate translation later (mis)attributed to Satan, ‘*non serviam*’ shares similarities with ‘Lucifer’, which originates from the Vulgate rendition of Isaiah 14:12: ‘How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!’ The referent of this verse as the Devil, however, was already present in the writings of Origen, Augustine and John Cassian (Wilken *et al.* 2007: 175). Interpreting Isaiah 14:12 as a description of the Devil’s exile from paradise thus sits in a broader genealogy of scriptural exegesis. In contrast, *non serviam* lacks such theological standardisation, mostly being associated with post-Miltonic literature or contemporary religious texts. Indeed, texts that employ it as metonym for the satanic spirit seem unaware of its Vulgate ‘roots’ or original context—or, at least, make no reference to it.

My interest regarding *non serviam*, however, is less the accuracy or origins of the phrase than its application and the ideological concepts that have filtered through it. These include the symbolic Satanisms discussed above, merging ideas of demonic opposition to ‘proper’ order with an emancipatory politics oriented at challenging and overturning that very order. As Schock outlines, this reconceptualisation coalesced via an array of factors ranging from concerns with ‘scriptural myth, religious and secular authority’ to more concrete fears resulting from ‘the political and social instability’ of the French Revolution and its aftermath (2003: 12). Ruben van Luijk holds that while Satan’s rebellion was traditionally figured as one of ‘proud, unlawful insurrection’ against divine authority, the *philosophes* and French Revolution gave the

¹ ‘*A saeculo confregisti iugum meum; rupisti vincula mea, et dixisti, “Non serviam”*’ (Kinney 2012: 288).

idea of insurrection a new, positive meaning for many European intellectuals, one which then became transferred to the figure of Satan (2013: 45). The reality was less simple. Far from being solely celebrated, overturning established order provoked significant anxiety among the European intellectual milieu (Schulman 2013). This ambivalence and anxiety was reflected in figurations of Satan, who was employed to articulate a range of theopolitical concepts. Questions about the nature and function of autonomy and sovereignty were one set of such concepts. As analysed above, one prominent figuration of the demon and its human allies (and the demonological evil they are constructed as embodying) is through ideas of deviation from a proper order, which I have termed *orthotaxy*. The witchcraft demonologies of the European witch-hunts provided clear examples of this structural relationship, in which clerical and theological writings constructed the idea of an occult network of diabolic others working to destroy authentic order. In this chapter, I will revisit parts of this discourse regarding classical theories of sovereign power.

Satan's post-Enlightenment reconstructions are also relevant here. The Devil's increasingly polyvalent appropriations transfigured him into a symbol able not only of demonising opponents but of being used as a symbol of righteous rebellion against systems of power that masked themselves in the rhetorics of unassailable truth—'radicals demonized themselves so to speak, in order to demonstrate their complete rejection of the Christian establishment' (Faxneld 2013a: 530). This duality expresses the malleability of the demonic as a symbol, able to be cast as both a status quo made corrupt and the other threatening that status quo from outside. I examine this duality closely below. It sits at the heart of demonology's serpentine relationship to ideas of both autonomy and sovereignty. In the previous chapter I outlined a genealogy of demonology's relationship to socio-cultural order, and this chapter continues that trajectory through analysis of its relation(s) to theopolitical notions of sovereignty. As I shall show over the course of this chapter, the demon's malleability in relation to sovereign power manifests in two different but interrelated forms as sovereignty's constitutive other. Firstly, it can operate as an exterior and anterior other, a demonic 'paganism' preceding the civilising impulse of Christianity, and continuing only outside its borders. This is the demonic as nature, which is both past and periphery,

and its manifestation in the writings of Thomas Hobbes is the focus of section two.² Related to this form, however, is another characterised as internal rather than external to (a certain kind of) sovereignty. As sovereign power (in, for example, the state) shifts further from its supposedly divine origins, the demonic mutates and adopts the form of a system that sets itself up as a substitute rather than an extension of God's authority. It becomes not (just) a threatening foreign influence but a corruption that ultimately manifests as a counterfeit order that attempts to efface and replace legitimate sovereign power. Working with this rough schema, we might posit two distinct but overlapping relations between the demonological other and theopolitical sovereignty: (i) the demonic as (state of) nature, and (ii) the demonic as systemic counterfeit. Going forth, I will refer to these as the 'natural demonic' and 'counterfeit demonic'. This chapter explores this demonological duality and how it intersects, undermines, supplants, and reinforces theologico-political ideas of sovereignty.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first analyses the construction of sovereign indivisibility in early political philosophy, notably the work of French jurist Jean Bodin, and how this indivisibility is primarily prescriptive rather than descriptive. The second analyses the works of Thomas Hobbes, primarily *Leviathan* (1651, rev. 1668), whose notion of sovereignty as guarding against an ante/antipolitical state of nature via mimesis of the divine might paradoxically transform it into the demonic force it exists to thwart. Drawing on the relationship of the state to the state of nature, the third section analyses the discursive figure of the demon via Jacques Derrida's exploration of the relationship(s) between the beast and the sovereign, two conceptual figures defined through exclusion from normative order. The juxtaposition between these figures permits a richer analysis of the counterfeit demonic—of the beast *as* sovereign or rather the sovereign as Beast (with accompanying apocalyptic connotations).

² The four classical theorists of political sovereignty are usually given as Bodin, Hobbes, Rousseau and Austin (King 2013: xxii–xxiii). Of these, this chapter concentrates mainly on the first two, since these are the two who concentrate substantially on demonology. Frederick Garber (1982: 33–62) explores Rousseau's conceptualisation of personal autonomy in dialogue with Milton's Satan, and so a demonological engagement with Rousseau is also possible.

THE (IN)DIVISIBILITY OF SOVEREIGNTY

The genealogy of (European) political notions of sovereignty can arguably be traced to Jean Bodin (1530–96), who, as Julian Franklin notes, was first to formulate the idea of the indivisibility of sovereign power (in Bodin 1992: xiii).³ This philosophico-political legacy reaches down through the history of European philosophical and political thought, through Thomas Hobbes, Carl Schmidt, Giorgio Agamben, Derrida, and beyond. The assumption of the indivisibility of sovereign power bears a (theo)logic of ‘absolute identity’ (Bates 2012: 4), and a certain kind of solitariness, a singularity unfettered by the Law that is its creature. The sovereign is thus conceived as both undivided in itself and yet divided from the world. Bodin (1992: 92) elaborates on the duties of this indivisible author(ity):

The first prerogative of sovereignty is to give the law to subjects. But who will be the subjects and who will obey if they also have the power to make law? And who will be able to make law if he is himself constrained to receive it from those to whom he gives it?

This question of ‘who’ is sovereign and (thus) ‘who’ are subjects has resonance both in contemporary global politics and the theological frame within which demonology operates. With regards to Bodin, this question links directly to demonology, and to the ‘anti-religion’ of witchcraft as ultimate other to political order. In order to understand his ideas of sovereign power, it is necessary to examine his context and legacy.

A Sovereignty Is Born

Bodin’s work has been singularly influential in the history of political philosophy. Initially trained in the Carmelite Order, Bodin left the order around 1550, turning to the study of law. He began practicing law in Paris around 1562—the year of the outbreak of the French Wars of Religion (Bodin 1992: ix–xii; 1995: 9–31). This period of protracted civil disorder, in which Catholics and Calvinists vied for political authority, constituted the backdrop to Bodin’s oeuvre. As Jonathan Pearl notes, ‘religious propaganda and political infighting went on ceaselessly. Each group accused its enemies of being in league with the Devil, and of committing the worst

³ ‘Sovereignty’ here refers specifically to European politico-philosophical constructions of the concept.

crimes imaginable against the state, God, and the true church' (in Bodin 1995: 13). The exact influence of this milieu on Bodin is impossible to determine. Pearl has linked Bodin's absolutism to his experience of the Wars as often held in check by 'strong' rulers like Henry II (*ibid.*: 10), although this is speculative. What can be verified, however, is how Bodin's public stances and his theories became constructed in political history. Bodin identified as Catholic but did not align himself with the Catholic League, instead occupying a centrist position known as *politique*—'The *politiques* held that disunity and violence were destroying France, and the only cure for the troubles was a strong and respected monarchy' (*ibid.*). This stance, alongside Bodin's famous 1576 *Six Books of the Commonwealth*—'the first modern study of the state'—and the model of religious tolerance found in his unpublished *Colloquium of the Seven*, contributed to an idea of Bodin as a 'man of modernity' (*ibid.*: 11). This apparent modernity, however, was seemingly at odds with the vehement intolerance portrayed in his 1580 *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*. In Chapter One, I analysed parts of the relation of early modern witchcraft demonologies to the rise of the nation-state. As a figure at a key juncture of this shared genealogy, Bodin, and specifically his ideas of sovereignty, should be viewed as part of this cultural milieu.

Bodin's idea of sovereign power is singular, monarchical, and patriarchal—there is one ruler, masculine and indivisible. Preston King has noted that Bodin held any other form of government to be 'seriously defective' (2013: xxiv), and Yvonne Sherwood has termed the exegetical tradition of reading the Bible as supportive of absolute patriarchal and monarchistic power the 'Bodinian Bible' (2008: 322): a Bible in which 'Monarchy, theocracy, and paternity are united in the holy trinity of God, father and king (2012: 318).⁴ The solitary sovereign was formed in the image of God and accordingly partook in the same principle of singular truth: 'Just as God, the great sovereign, cannot make a God equal to Himself', Bodin writes, 'so we can say that the prince, whom we have taken as the image of God, cannot make a subject equal to himself without annihilation of his power' (1992: 50). The concept framed here is the

⁴ Sherwood opposes this Bible, also called the Patriarchal/Monarchist Bible, to the Liberal or Lockean Bible, which reads the Bible as supportive of liberalist rights and values (2012: 303–332). This Bible, which is often vague and mutable in its pronouncements, is the version deployed by many contemporary politicians, such as George Bush (Sherwood 2006), Tony Blair, and David Cameron. The Bible read by the subjects of this thesis can be seen as a curious hybrid of these Bibles, pinning for patriarchal absolutism through a framework of liberal rights.

‘classical doctrine’ of sovereignty, which posits the concentration of power at a central point—power that must be ‘absolute, total, illimitable and indivisible’ (King 2013: xxii). Neil Walker (2013: 20) juxtaposes this concept to older forms of political authority, writing that

as distinct from the overlapping and interlocking pattern of influence among dynastically sovereign, imperial, clerical, feudal, and other forms that were characteristic of medieval authority, modern sovereignty denotes the finality, comprehensive remit, and indivisibility of the ruling power within a territory. It follows that that modern sovereignty’s interior and exterior dimensions become closely mutually conditioned and enabled. For the monopolistic authority of a State within its territory to be achieved and maintained, recognition from other polities and their commitment to non-interference was necessary. Equally, for States to exercise their external sovereignty as actors capable of entering into international legal commitments, the indivisibility and finality of their internal authority was required.

I return to certain features of this description below. For now, it is necessary to note the central idea of this sovereignty, namely that it is a territorial space that is controlled and defined by a central, singular authority (the sovereign). As Paul Friedland notes, this conception of sovereign power encodes a notion of the ‘*radiation* of sovereign will from the center to the periphery’ (2002: 49).

Sovereign Limits I: The Self(-Otherness)

The singular sovereign and his territory are interrelated: both are assumed to adopt a characteristic of unitariness that marks them as absolute within themselves, and this unitariness is needed to conceive of the sovereign as possessing determinative power (R.J. Joyce 2013: 62). Derrida identifies this core aspect of sovereign power as *ipseity*, writing that ‘Before any sovereignty of the state, of the nation-state, of the monarch, or, in democracy, of the people, ipseity names a principle of legitimate sovereignty, the accredited or recognised supremacy of a power or a force’ (2004: 11–12). Ipseity, for Derrida, marks the principle of the self-same—the recognition of those like oneself—and through this the power, authority and proprietary possession that comes with the codification of that one-self. It privileges oneness and processes that lead toward oneness, processes that always inscribe a relationship of violence. He writes elsewhere (1995a: 78):

As soon as there is the One, there is murder, wounding, traumatism. The One guards against/keeps some of the other. It protects *itself* from the other, but, in the movement of this jealous violence, it comprises in itself, thus guarding it, the self-otherness or self-difference (the difference from within oneself) which makes it One...At once, at the same time, but in a same time that is out of joint, the One forgets to remember itself to itself, it keeps and erases the archive of this injustice that it is. Of this violence that it does. The One makes itself violence. It violates and does violence to itself but it also institutes itself as violence. It becomes what it is, the very violence—that it does to itself. Self-determination as violence.

For Derrida, therefore, by (necessarily) disavowing its self-difference ipseity inscribes and institutes itself as violence. Through grounding itself in an indivisible identity, sovereignty places itself (yet must simultaneously deny this placement) in relation to that which divides it: its own self-otherness. This self-otherness must thus be guarded against, denied, and excluded in order to preserve the phantasmatic nature of ipseity's indivisibility. It should be noted here that, politically, sovereignty is not identical to governance: governance can be divided, whereas sovereignty—the principle of unity on which that governance is grounded—cannot be (Loughlin 2013: 39). Sovereignty is grounded on the principle of ipseity, and any division of ipseity negates the unity on which it operates. Summarising from the brief description above, classical notions of sovereignty construct a conceptual and territorial unity determined by a similarly singular authority (even if the instantiation of that authority is divided). There can be other sovereigns in this system, but each is absolute in his dominion, which is figuratively impregnable. Sovereignty and its sovereign territoriality are configured as (mutually) indivisible. Indeed: 'Any limit on sovereignty eradicates it, any division of sovereignty destroys it' (*ibid.*). However, if Derrida is correct, then this sovereignty was always-already divided by the processes of its own self-constitution. I will return to this below.

Sovereignty's determinative power within its territory ties closely into Bodin's concept of the commonwealth (*république*), the definition of which is the primary concern of his *Six Books*, and which he defines as 'the rightly ordered government of a number of families, and of those things which are their common concern, by a sovereign power' (in Zoller 2008: 69). However, this 'common concern' is notably teleological—the commonwealth is oriented towards a specific end: 'true felicity', defined as a state of earthly perfection figured as the 'sovereign good...in general,

and of each of its citizens in particular' achieved by the pursuit of natural and divine law, a law made manifest by cultivation of 'the intellectual and contemplative virtues': prudence (differentiating good from evil), knowledge (differentiating truth from falsehood), and faith (differentiating piety from impiety) (Weinert 2007: 347). Analysing the theological basis of Bodin's theory of the commonwealth, Elizabeth Zoller notes that, for Bodin, the 'ideal of the modern State is a secularized Church' (Zoller 2008: 70).

This ideal of the state as secular Church and the theologico-political teleology of sovereignty relate to Bodin's notions of religious tolerance. As Saba Mahmood (2006: 324) notes, modern European secularism is often seen as stemming in part from ideas of religious tolerance formulated in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, in response to the European Wars of Religion (see also W. Brown 2008; C. Taylor 1998). I will turn to this origin story below, however Bodin's theory of tolerance is intimately linked to ideas of him as a 'man of modernity' who helped pave the way out of medieval darkness. This theory, expounded mainly in the *Colloquium* (2010), is based around notions of harmony and plays out as a dialogue between seven men of different faiths—a Calvinist, Muslim, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Jew, and sceptic.⁵ Marion Leathers Kuntz summarises that the text's view as 'not relativistic, exclusive, or disinterested' but involving 'a warm acceptance' based on 'civility and respect, common ground, and the many facets of truth': for Bodin, truth was the fundamental ground of all legitimate religions (1998: 126). Tolerance is extended to those who share in ipseity, those like one-self, who share in a mutual love of the singularity and sovereignty of truth.

Yet there is a constitutive other who lies outside this enlightened tolerance: the witch. As discussed above, demonological witchcraft was discursively configured as an 'anti-religion', a diabolic inversion of true (Christian) faith. Bodin's *Demon-Mania* adheres to this model. Witchcraft was a 'crime of divine and human treason' (1995: 200). As Maggi noted that the vocal denial of God constituted part of the 'devastating

⁵ That these individuals are men is noteworthy. Rebecca May Wilkin (2008: 53–96) explores the highly gendered nature of Bodin's theories of sovereignty, noting that Bodin's hatred of (predominantly female) witches fits into his theory of state elaborated in the *Six Books*, where he describes the proper and properly hierarchical structure of the family as mirroring an ordered commonwealth (see Bodin 1992: 92). Wilkin concludes that, for Bodin, 'Rule by women leads to the annihilation of the state, while women's knowledge of the occult heralds the decadence of the moral universe' (2008: 74–5).

sylllogism' of demonic action, Bodin highlights the 'first occupation' of witches as their denial 'of God and all religion' (*ibid.*: 204). This denial of 'all religion', does not only include the formal faiths of the later *Colloquium*, but also superstitions, and ties to a renunciation of morality and law generally. He writes:

[T]he most detestable witches are those who renounce God, and His service; or if they do not worship God, but have some superstitious religion, renounce that, in order to give themselves to the Devil, by express agreement. For there is no religion so superstitious that it does not restrain men in some way within the confines of the law of nature: to obey fathers and mothers, and magistrates, and also to avoid doing harm to anyone (*ibid.*: 112).

Bodin here connects obedience to one's parents and formal law with the laws of nature. He also differentiates demonological witchcraft from mere superstition, which for him has some value as a system of order. Satan, meanwhile, 'wants to tear from the hearts of men all fear of committing offense' (*ibid.*), yet the ways in which he does this appear less as anarchy and more as an opposing order.

Bodin relates that human–demonic alliances are made by tacit or express agreement, and sometimes sealed on the person's flesh (but only if Satan is unsure of their loyalty, the absence of a mark here being the clearest mark of guilt), and he speaks of these transactions as a transfer of 'fealty' and agreement of a 'mutual contract' (*ibid.*: 112–13). Witchcraft was a crime against the 'majesty of God', worse even than idolatry because, while the latter required only that one 'bow down' to the idol, witchcraft included active prayer and invocation to Satan (*ibid.*: 203–5). For Bodin then, the lawlessness of witchcraft seemed to manifest not as an absence but an inversion of law, or rather of the overturning of established systems of law—parental, magistratical—in favour of new (dangerous, illegitimate) allegiances.

Kuntz argues that Bodin's hatred of witchcraft stemmed from the idea that, while demons derived power from God, witches and magicians had consciously allied with Satan, whose primary goal was to destroy God's works (in Bodin 2010: xxxiii–xxxvii). This seems to be borne out in his writings, in which the verbal or written allegiance to Satan marks the 'most detestable' of witches. Ideas of conscious allegiance are important to the politicisation of witchcraft and the demonologies constructed by both Bodin and Hobbes. As Julio Caro Baroja has written, while in the early sixteenth century there were attempts to reduce magical events to natural or

psychological causes, one repercussion was that greater attention began to be paid to issues of allegiance: ““mania” turns into “latria”: the supreme worship that is due only to God is given to the Evil One, in a sacrilegious and abominable manner, and is given to him directly, unequivocally’ (2001: 35). Witchcraft was a demonological counterfeit of ‘all religion’, premised on a denial of God’s majesty and of the human sovereignty that is its earthly replica. This act of ‘divine and human treason’ was thus predicated on an attempt to overturn all moral and political order. However, the true danger of witches was their decision to consciously will other to the sovereign will. They signed themselves to an-other way of being and believing inimical to *an* order envisioned as order *as such*.

Sovereign Limits II: Origins and Borders

The witch thus served as a figure of the contestation of sovereign indivisibility, and had to be eliminated in order to secure that indivisibility. Yet if sovereignty was indivisible, how could this indivisibility be threatened? The answer lies in the way sovereignty has operated as a prescriptive rather than purely descriptive concept, and also relates to why it has fallen out of political fashion in the contemporary era. As David Bates notes, in a post-Cold War world defined more and more by transnational cultural and economic flows, porous national boundaries and global media communications, the indivisibility of sovereign will is viewed as increasingly at odds with ‘modern (and postmodern) notions of plurality and essential fragmentation’ (2012: 4; see also Kalmo and Skinner 2010b). Yet sovereignty endures as a political idea and national ideal: it provides a ‘powerful and sustained logic of reproduction in global political relations’ (Walker 2013: 21). Moreover, as Bodin’s sovereignty was based on theological principles, these principles still exert their influence on modern theopolitical demonologies. Many of the demonological discourses examined in later chapters of this thesis involve both the glorification of singular patriarchal authority and an attempt to cultivate ‘the intellectual and contemplative virtues’—the capacity to differentiate good, truth, and piety from evil, falsehood, and impiety, in the creation of an authentic, godly community centred on that authority. The reasons behind the contemporary political critique of sovereignty, however, expose problems inherent in the concept, many of which are illuminating to the demonologies analysed below.

One of the most common narratives of the development of political sovereignty is that the classical model of sovereignty became instituted at the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War (Philpott 1997), which (re-)established the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* (whose region, his religion) as a guiding principle of state sovereignty. This principle, which dictated that the ruler of a region determined its religious affiliation, was first formulated in the 1555 Peace of Augsburg (Krasner 1999: 79). Organised between Catholics and Lutherans in a Reformation-torn Holy Roman Empire, the Peace dictated that the territories ruled by Catholics would remain Catholic and those ruled by members of the Augsburg Confession (Lutherans) would remain Lutheran. The peace ultimately did little, however. As Daniel Philpott comments, 'the emperor and the princes continued to contest faith through arms, culminating in the Thirty Years' War beginning in 1618. Until princes were authoritative over religion, and the Holy Roman Emperor impotent over it, a system of sovereign states would not exist' (1997: 29). This transition, generally speaking, occurred in the treaties of Westphalia, when Calvinists were also extended the rights of *cuius regio* and it became a grounding principle of the new international order. It was also noticeably limited: the German princely states were forced to revert to their religious affiliations in 1624 and given clear responsibilities to exercise religious toleration (Glanville 2014: 52). According to this narrative, as well as Bodin, this new post-Westphalian system owed itself to Hugo Grotius—his *The Rights of War and Peace*, written in 1625, described, as Philpott suggests, 'a world of internally and externally sovereign monarchs, united only by a natural law, which, he argued, was valid even if there was no God' (1997: 30).

The primacy of Westphalia in the narrativisation of state sovereignty has been challenged by recent scholarship, including that of Stephen Krasner (1999, 2010) and, recently, Luke Glanville (2014).⁶ Glanville has noted that certain assigned traits of sovereignty, such as nonintervention and the autonomous recognition and self-

⁶ This challenge has been counter-challenged by, among others, Daniel Philpott (2000), who rescues a more nuanced 'Westphalia-as-origin' narrative through reinscribing it as a result of ideas and material circumstances brought about by the Reformation. He successfully represents Westphalia as a consolidation of Reformation (re)figurations of political sovereignty by encoding a division between spiritual and temporal authority. This position is complimentary rather than oppositional to the one advanced here, however, since within this framework the proper order of society (while secularised) is still ordained by God.

governance of territories, are actually not present in the Westphalian treaties, and the formative nature of the event is mostly a nineteenth and twentieth-century projection (2014: 49–56). There are, however, aspects of religio-political order instituted at Westphalia, the most crucial of which is the conceptual bond between sovereignty and freedom of religion. Additionally, while he challenges the International Relations theory origin myth of Westphalia, Glanville also links the concept of sovereignty as articulated in an international order to theological principles (*ibid.*: 58–9):

Sovereignty, granted by God, implied solemn responsibilities under him for which rulers would be held to account...[and] in relations between states, sovereignty did not simply imply a supposed ‘traditional’ right to nonintervention. Rather, it implied a right to wage (just) war and it entailed enforceable obligations. It was widely agreed that a sovereign could be forcibly held to account by neighboring states for tyrannical and oppressive violations of the natural law, even if the subjects themselves could not rightfully resist their sovereign.

Several other scholars (Baranger 2010; Elden 2009; Krasner 1999, 2010; Piirimäe 2010) have corroborated this view, noting that, while held as indivisible, sovereignty was in a sense always-already divided. Its territorial borders were always open to transgression and its legitimacy contingent on recognition by its peers, undermining its claims to indivisible authority and control. The transnational cultural, economic, and migratory flows that are seen today as contravening the sovereign territory of the nation-state therefore, in fact, simply make clearer issues that were always present. However, Glanville’s critique of the Westphalian origin myth and articulation of the rights and limitations of the emergent ‘sovereign state’ system highlight several important features. Firstly, while ideas of sovereign indivisibility are fundamental to classical theories of sovereign power, this indivisibility was never truly actualised—it is, as Derrida notes, mainly a fictional or phantasmatic concept (2009: 32–62).

More importantly, however, is its role in what might be termed the ‘godly community’—the idea that sovereignty was bequeathed on states so long as they obeyed certain precepts, and could be stripped upon violation of these. These two ideas are conceptually linked—sovereignty is granted on the basis of the adherence to a natural law that is God-given, bestowed by the sovereign God as the precondition of rule. The articulation of the limits of this law formulates the precepts of a political soteriology that locates territories according to a dichotomy of good and evil, blessed

and damned, compliant with or defiant of natural law (itself a mirror of divine law). These precepts are important to the case studies examined later in this thesis, in which the mythic nature of sovereign indivisibility and the realisation of its fragmentation in modernity become significant for their political demonologies. In the narratives of these texts, the reassertion of a unitary, hierarchical relationship of (divine, principally masculine) power over and against a plurality of fractured, heterogeneous (demonic, frequently feminine) powers usually occupies centre stage. While sovereign unity was never grounded in reality, the perception of its breakdown into a multiplicity of competing legitimacies (and the possible victory of those seen as antithetical to that unity) leads to an anxiety that provokes an attempted reconstruction of ultimately phantasmatic sovereignty: the reassertion of an allegedly primordial orthotaxy over and against a plurality of Others. The ‘fictional’ quality of sovereign indivisibility, therefore, should not cause us to underestimate its importance or potency as a politico-political ideal(isation).

The Prescriptive Phantasm

The idea of sovereignty is a marker not necessarily (only) of description but (also) of prescription, of a strategy of desire. As Martti Koskenniemi discusses, sovereignty always straddles the divide between these scriptions, between an ‘is’ and an ‘ought’. He clarifies that sovereignty ‘is neither a historical nor a sociological fact but part of a political vocabulary whose point is not to register aspects of the world but to achieve them: to preserve or change a status quo, to support or oppose particular contestants’ (2010: 232). The projection of this concept (re)presents the desire for a specific (theopolitical) state of affairs characterised by the myth of its own indivisibility, that of a territory liberated from the instability of its borders and an author whose claims to authority are not dependant on acceptance by its subjects. As Preston King writes in his comparative exploration of Bodin and Hobbes, sovereignty names a ‘cluster of rules’ formulated as the essential and necessary ground of order, but this order is *an* order clothing itself as the necessary and timeless ground of order as such (2013: xv–xvi). Sovereignty thus demarcates the boundaries of a specific (religious and political) vision, one which through the act of demarcation necessarily becomes exclusionary.

As Hent Kalmo and Quentin Skinner remark, ‘any claim as to what sovereignty is can [therefore] also be read as a claim as to what it is not’ (2010a: 11).

But what, and where, is sovereignty not? What are its limit and its other? For Bodin the other of sovereignty was ultimately the witch, who operated to destabilise sovereign power through the mechanisms of a rejection of allegiance—the denial of God’s majesty and adherence to its Other. Bodin claims that sovereignty constituted the ‘absolute and perpetual power’ of the commonwealth, his model of the rightly-organised society (1992: 1). Bodin’s theories of theopolitical order, of ‘rightly-organised society’, present a force that is absolute, perpetual and hierarchical, whose being is built around the capacity of the sovereign to create law as the structure that governs relations between subjects and between those subjects and the sovereign (God, monarch, government, constitution). Sovereignty might thus be said to operate as a movement of unification and ordering, which posits itself as unified and ordered *a priori*.

The alleged indivisibility of this orthotaxic principle constitutes the blueprint for its constitutive function: a holistic, total unification of societal relations through the creating of law. Denis Baranger (2010) argues that, at least since the sixteenth century, European ideas of sovereignty have acted as both site and symbol for an aggregation of power and authority that would otherwise be (seen as) fragmented. Mariia Federova also remarks on this symbolic aggregation, albeit in relation to what she sees as the difference between sovereignty as construed in the medieval period and the form it takes in early modernity. She elaborates:

The sovereignty of the medieval ruler was practically one-dimensional: he was a judge-king, free only in the adoption of final judicial rulings. In domestic political affairs he was bound by obligations to his vassals, in foreign affairs by the political might of the church. The king of the modern state, as the embodiment of state sovereignty, was no longer merely a judge but, above all, a legislator and a creator of political and legal norms. Here, in other words, state power itself changes its form. The judge-king represents the static character of the *res publica christiana*, while the legislator-king represents the dynamic character of society in the modern era (2011: 32).

While the distinction Federova draws here is enlightening with regards to perception of sovereign power, it seems to fall into the fallacy of believing the ties that bind sovereignty in the modern era are less constricting, or more absent, when compared to

earlier historical periods. The sovereignty of the modern state, albeit not confined by the political power of the church, is still constrained by other international powers (and by the structure of the social contract itself; see below). Its actions and policies will be weighed by other sovereign powers, and may be found wanting.⁷

Bodin offers a formulation of sovereignty as beyond the law which it creates; it is a mimic of God, who is outside the constraints of the natural laws that he made to govern the world (and while God obeys those rules, he has the right to suspend them in the moment of exception: the miracle). The modern idea of sovereignty, however, reflects a sovereignty that is contingent, a pawn of laws not of its own devising: a lesser sovereign at the mercy of far greater powers, and so perhaps (by classical definitions) not a sovereign at all. I explore this contingency throughout this thesis, but the issue is worth briefly raising here as one part of a conceptual genealogy of sovereignty in the West. It highlights a hierarchisation of sovereign powers either absent in earlier philosophico-political discussions, or raised solely in relation to the theological principle of the absolute sovereignty of God, of whom the earthly Prince, no matter how powerful, is a mere representative, lieutenant, or imperfect, temporal substitute (Skinner 2010). In reference to this latter hierarchy of power, Bodin writes that ‘he is absolutely sovereign...who does not recognise anything higher than him after God’ (in Baranger 2010: 49). With the nominal removal of the divine as guarantor of legitimacy from the international community of sovereign states, new measures and frameworks of legitimacy become necessary.⁸

This necessity is tied closely to questions of the particular and the universal, as well as to the dilemma of secular eschatological structures (like Marxism, whose

⁷ A clear contemporary example of this can be discerned in the rhetoric and practice surrounding ‘rogue states’, where the assignation of the category ‘rogue state’ is always enacted within the context of a power differential. As Derrida elaborates, ‘it is the most powerful sovereign states which, making international right and bending it to their interests, propose and in fact produce limitations on the sovereignty of the weakest states, sometimes...going so far as to violate or not the international right they have helped institute and, in so doing, to violate the institutions of that international right, all the while accusing the weaker states of not respecting international rights and of being rogue states... like those animals said to be “rogue” animals, which don’t even bend to the law of their own animal society’ (2009: 209). Not all sovereignties are equal, which necessarily troubles the entire concept at its foundation, at the foundation of autonomy and ipseity, the porosity of selfhood in the face of the other.

⁸ This dilemma is the problem constitutive of modernity broadly, out of which many projects of emancipation are born and which thus mirror its founding paradox in that it constitutes itself as a radical break from a previous state of being that it both requires as the ground from which to emerge and in another sense creates through its act of differentiation—for there to be a ‘premodern’ there must first be a modern.

classless society in fact mimics those utopian religious structures it disavows). Ernesto Laclau argues that within Christian paradigms a ‘logic of incarnation’ links particular mortal actors to the universal, with God serving as the mediator to facilitate the manifestation of the universal in the particular. For Laclau, Christ is the paradigm of this structure, but it is present whenever a person is constructed as fulfilling a cosmic function with regard to God’s plan for the world. The appointed monarch is an example of this, since he or she embodies universal principles in their particularity through God’s appointment. Those embodied principles, however, are ultimately external to creation (as there is no authority higher than God). Once the external guarantor of universality is removed, the source of universality has to arise internally to the world, and in a manner that is accessible to human reason and rationality, transparent rather than opaque like the hidden motivations of divinity (Laclau 1996: 23–5). Laclau uses the example of the ‘universal class’ of the proletariat in Marxist thought as one attempt to navigate the latter, arguing that it merely replicates the ostensibly-abandoned theologic of incarnation (*ibid.*: 24–34). Within the structures of international relations particular laws and norms (such as human rights) become transfigured into shadows of the universal, approximations of principles that may be able to serve as the suddenly-godless ground of a new order. In the case of the rogue state, for example, the state is seen as in breach of this new universal. It is rogue, outlaw, and has reverted in some sense to that state of nature, like beasts, which rest at the constitutive limit of the law, thus forfeiting any protection that law gives.

The logic of incarnation, as universalised particular or particularised universal, orients itself around questions of orthotaxy and the circumscription of sovereign boundaries. In Bodin’s formulation, the sovereign’s sovereignty is derived through his appointment by and mimetic relation to God, who is absolute sovereign. States in an international order have their legal sovereignty dependent on the desires of the bodies and states who control the regulations of that order, the particulars that have been universalised as markers of an entirely worldly orthotaxy (which is not only a ‘proper’ hierarchy of being(s), but the teleology for which that hierarchy supposedly exists). In the following section, I analyse a form of the creation of geographies of sovereignty, both ideological and literal, that sits at the origins of European political sovereignty: the division between civil society—the political state or commonwealth—and the

state of nature, which is its temporal-spatial, moral and ontological limit. I focus specifically on the state of nature formulated by Thomas Hobbes, who, unlike Bodin, deals with demonology not as an anti-political reality but as a phantasmatic delusion.⁹ This phantasm is intimately related to sovereignty as the other that the sovereign must guard against lest it lapse into the ante/antipolitical state of nature or civil unrest. However, this sovereignty carries the possibility of its own demonologisation: while it guards against the natural demonic it may itself be a counterfeit of the very god it apparently serves. This analysis then helps frame a broader discussion of the space between the beast (as sub-political) and sovereign (as supra-political) outlined by Derrida, which feeds into the eschatological horizon that is itself the absolute (the final, the absolving and dissolving) limit of the demonic—and of sovereignty itself.

THE STATE OF NATURE AND THE SOVEREIGN'S ENVOUS DUTY

In early discourses of Christian demonology, the wilderness is a site of contestation. As Christ found, the Devil waits for us in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13), and this biblical narrative became extrapolated into a paradigm. Writing on early Christian ascetic practices, Judith Adler (2006: 24–5) notes that an understanding of the wilderness as a place of both spiritual epiphany and demonic temptation became amplified in early monastic writing, which asserted ‘that demons, weakened by the advance of Christianity, fled to the desert...to concentrate their forces.’ By travelling into the wilderness, monks engaged these demons—a cluster of errant spirits and yet-unvanquished pagan gods—in hand-to-hand combat as ‘militant

⁹ The state of nature also features prominently in the social contract theory of Rousseau, in which it adopts significantly different features. Both narrate the emergence of political humanity from nature, but while in order to make ‘citizens desire the state, Hobbes demonized a state called nature’ (Rogin 1987: 299), for Rousseau the contract is a fall from grace: nature is a state of nomadic contentment not violent precarity, and civilisation disrupts this harmonious prepolitical and presocial order. Also, while Hobbes constructs a vision of a ‘Christian Commonwealth’ against a demonic other, for Rousseau this is oxymoronic, since ‘a society of true christians would no longer be a society of men’ (1997: 148); Christians are spiritually-oriented, and their nation is ‘not of this world’, further, by ‘being perfect, [this society] would lack cohesion; its very perfection would be its fatal vice’ (*ibid.*). For Rousseau, nature is prelapsarian. For Hobbes, it is fallen creation. While both work from a model of Christian (anti)politics that demonise the alternative to their preferred order, since the case studies of this thesis are oriented towards the construction of a perfected society, Hobbes’s vision of proper civilisation and its demonological other(s) is the one most relevant to this thesis, and thus the one I concentrate on.

missionaries on religious frontiers' (*ibid.*). David Brakke (2006) has examined this conflict in depth, analysing the discursive creation of the monk—the *monakhós* or 'single one', tempered into integrated personhood—via its inextricable relationship to the other it combatted: the demons of the wilderness, chimerical entities able to appear as animal, human, or angel—'products, agents, and symbols of the diversity and separation that resulted from the fall, as opposed to the uniformity and unity in which the monk originated and to which he seeks to return' (*ibid.*: 17).

Alignments of the demon with diversity and the Christian spiritual warrior with unity, and the tempering of the latter through combat with the former, are themes I revisit over the course of this thesis. While separated by millennia, contemporary American spiritual warfare discourses often draw on the same scriptural citations and ideas as these monastic discourses, although the sites of contestation have notably become urban rather than wilderness, or rather urban-as-wilderness—when Beast becomes sovereign, city becomes wilderness (I develop this formula below). Such discourses also orient themselves toward similar ends, taming such wilderness spaces and integrating the individual in service to God. In this section I want to explore a different but related ideological construction of wilderness useful for elucidating contemporary conservative evangelical demonologies: the alleged emergence of the political state (and humanity-as-political) out of a 'state of nature' and what this state of nature is coded as representing. In this section, I analyse this narrative of political emergence in the works of Thomas Hobbes. I examine the core elements of Hobbes's theorisation of the state of nature and how civil society is created out of that state through the bringing-into-being of the sovereign. By doing so, I examine how Hobbes construes the earthly sovereign, the leviathan of state, as a 'mortal god', one who both elevates humanity from its original state of chaotic violence and acts as a bulwark against 'demonological' beliefs of counterfeit truth that threaten to return humanity to that state—a counterfeit the sovereign may itself be in danger of becoming.

Antepolitics and Antipolitics

Peter Steinberger argues that Hobbes (and Rousseau, albeit differently) constructs the body politic—the body of the state or commonwealth—as having been formed out of the state of nature by a collective act of will. For each, the fundamental distinction of

politics is that between a natural, pre-political (but not necessarily pre-social) situation and civil society (2008: 596). For Hobbes, civil society and the sovereign who is its head and governing principle are a creation of the social contract itself. Steinberger proceeds to describe the contractual break with the state of nature as a double creation:

[W]e should say that the contractors actually create two quite distinct entities, though presumably they do so simultaneously. First, they create a commonwealth, a body politic, a state; and second, they create, in the process, a sovereign entity of some kind that functions as the soul or active agent of the commonwealth (*ibid.*: 598–9).

Like Bodin's vision, Hobbes's image of the sovereign was also absolute, unlimited, indivisible, and perpetual (King 2013: xii). The fashion of its creation, however, is quite different: the sovereign is not appointed from above but authored from below. The Hobbesian sovereign is a 'Feigned' or 'Artificial person', the agential force of the commonwealth who possesses no natural being of its own, but is created by the social contract (1996: 111).¹⁰ It exists as a representative of the general will that birthed it. This does not weaken its authority, however, but in many ways strengthens it. As I elaborate below, while authored by his subjects, the sovereign is in no way beholden to them, and indeed infractions of his purpose are coded only as sins against God—the subject cedes his or her rights at the moment of authorship. A general will authors a sovereign will, which subsumes both that general will and particular wills. Like Bodin's, Hobbes's sovereign is the source (and force) of the law—while he seems to eschew the more overtly theological tendencies of Bodin in favour of a popular origin to sovereignty, the sovereign's main function is still guiding its subjects in accordance with a natural law derived from God. The subjects themselves are construed as the authorising force of the sovereign through a collective creation, but after this creation they are subordinates to it.

For Hobbes, the leviathan is authored to overcome the precarity of humanity's state in nature, in which—in his (in)famous dictum—'the life of man [is] solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short' (1996: 89). Hobbes's political philosophy is often

¹⁰ My analysis is drawn mainly from *Leviathan*, in which Hobbes deals with demonology most thoroughly. I supplement this with *On the Citizen* regarding his broader political theories. The edition of *Leviathan* used is the 1996 version edited by Richard Tuck, and the edition of *On the Citizen* is the 1998 version edited by Tuck and Michael Silverthorne, both published by Cambridge University Press.

thought to derive from his experiences with the English Civil War (1642–51). While it is difficult to prove direct correlation, several scholars (Bobbio 1993: 43; Melzer 2012: 181; Vaughan 2007: 55) have noted that concepts of civil war frequently elide into those of nature and, while never fully identical, consistently reflect one another. Sara Melzer summarises the underlying fear of Hobbes's theories as the idea that 'The most civilized of human beings could slip back down the evolutionary continuum to their former beastlike state of nature' (2012: 181). The Hobbesian state of nature is not just antepolitical but also '*antipolitical*' (Bobbio 1993: 42)—it returns when politics fails.¹¹

Ideas of the antipolitical (and its elision into the antepolitical) are important for Hobbesian demonology, as well as his differing understandings of freedom in civil society versus the state of nature. While freedom in the state of nature is constrained by natural impediments alone, freedom in civil society is constrained also by the law created by the sovereign. For Hobbes, when entering into the social contract—the collective authoring of the sovereign by/as the general will—a person divests 'himselfe [sic] of the liberty of hindering another of the benefit of his own right to the same thing' (1996: 190). Civil laws exist, for Hobbes, in order to 'limit the naturall liberty of particular men, in such a manner, as they might not hurt, but assist one another' (*ibid.*: 315). Moreover, this limit is born 'from feare of some evill consequence' (*ibid.*: 192) resulting from the breaking of the contracts and promises that condition the law as the relationship between the sovereign and its subjects. This function of the sovereign as creator of law, and the delimiting of boundaries within which the subject may freely operate, requires analysis. Perhaps the starkest illustration of the relationship is in Hobbes's treatment of the liberty of the subject to disobey. Hobbes details several possible negotiations between sovereign and subject in considerable depth in *Leviathan*, but one is most crucial—only when 'our refusall to obey, frustrates the End for which the Sovereignty was ordained; then there is no Liberty to refuse' (1996: 269). The particular will is thus subsumed into the general;

¹¹ While nature is part of humanity's collective prepolitical history, it is part of their localised present in Hobbes's image of America—in which 'savage people' are organised only into 'small Families, the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust, have no government; and live at this day in that brutish manner' (1996: 89). Nature was thus instantiated in Hobbes's present as a colonised/colonisable periphery. Both Aravamudan (2009) and Moloney (2011) have explored the importance of colonialist paradigms to his thought through his constructed projection of America as in the state of nature.

dissent is possible unless it thwarts the purpose for which sovereignty was created: the security of the people (Zagorin 2009: 86). That is, preventing the slippage of humanity (back) into animality—the preservation of (political, moral, ontological) order. Functionally, however, this stricture removes the possibility of meaningful dissent. Anything that challenges the actions or disagrees with the purpose of the sovereign will is coded as attempting to thwart its purpose—even when such actions are ineffectual. This is exhibited in a brief mention of witches early in *Leviathan*, in which Hobbes writes (1996: 18),

I think not that their witchcraft is any reall power; but yet they are justly punished, for the false beliefe they have, that they can do such mischief, joyned with the purpose to do it if they can: their trade being neerer to a new Religion, than to a Craft or Science.

Thus, while witches lacked ‘reall power’, the fact of their heretical believing is itself seen as a threat to legitimate order and therefore ‘justly punished’. Hobbes’s fixation on the threat of false belief systems forms the basis of his treatment of demonology, a treatment that underlines a fatal flaw in his construction of sovereignty itself.

The Imitation God

Unlike Bodin’s, Hobbes’s sovereign is not a straightforward regent of God. Nevertheless, his function as the guarantor of legitimate order mimics theological precepts. Hobbes’s sovereign replicates many of the features of Bodin’s, noticeably in his absolutism, perpetuity, and prescriptions of indivisibility. In *The Two Gods of Leviathan*, A.P. Martinich (1992: 336) explores the theological motifs in Hobbes’s work, identifying three core similarities between the ‘mortal god’ of the state and the ‘immortal god’ he imitates:

Hobbes held that the civil state is a mortal god, who serves under the immortal God. The civil state imitates God in three crucial respects. First, the civil state has overwhelming power to control its citizens. Second, it has no obligations to its citizens, even though they have obligations to it. Third, the civil state saves people from the imminent death lurking in the state of nature, just as God supposedly saves people from the death of sin.

Martinich is broadly accurate in this assessment, though it should be noted that the state has perhaps one obligation to its subjects—the fulfilment of the salvific purpose it was authored for: Martinich’s third commonality. For Hobbes, the leviathan of state is authored as a protector, bequeathing law to its subjects as a way of guarding against

the anarchy of the ante/antipolitical that lies beyond its spatial and temporal boundaries. However, the sovereign has no *specific* obligations to subjects beyond its fulfilment of its sovereign purpose. The second part of this clause, the obligations of the citizenry to the state, however, ties into a potential fourth similarity: the subject's duty of virtue.

In the later *Behemoth*, Hobbes explicitly ties notions of personal virtue to obedience to the state, writing that: 'The virtue of the subject is comprehended wholly in obedience to the laws of the commonwealth...nothing is injustice or iniquity, otherwise, than it is against the law' (in Schulman 2011: 30). This transfer of morality from the divine to the artificial person gives the state a quasi-soteriological function beyond saving the individual from nature: the individual's soul becomes tied to the structures of the mortal god, the new wellspring of sovereign law, which dictates the division of the good from the evil, the sacred from the profane. I noted previously that for Bodin, the sovereign's purpose was to guide the polity toward felicity—an earthly perfection arising from cultivating prudence, knowledge, and faith (Weinert 2007: 34–7). Hobbes's sovereign has a similar function—indeed, Zoller terms his and Bodin's visions both 'ideal[s] of the modern State [as] a secularized Church' (2008: 70)—but its relationship to God is less straightforward. The leviathan was bound, for Hobbes, to obey God-given natural law, which Zagorin notes as a 'genuine and significant moral limit' on its absolutism (2009: 95). Yet while Hobbes acknowledges that a sovereign might pursue actions that contravene this limit, which is 'a breach of trust', its subjects do not have a right to resist it—'because they have authorised all his actions, and [so] made them their own' (1996: 172). This does not mean the sovereign is unaccountable; it is accountable to God (ultimately) but not its subjects.

Due to the distant role played by the divine, Alex Schulman interprets the god of *Leviathan* in a deist light, as a God 'radically divested of content' with the exception of its existence as prime mover and uncaused cause, whose existence is necessary as a grounding principle for the system to function. For Schulman (2011: 25–6), this God is required only

as a recognized and orderly starting point, from which the sense of both the natural law and empiricist approaches can be derived: natural law, because the universe is created rather than accidental, and thus *a priori* endowed with some sort of order, and empiricist approaches, because the

creator has given humans the reason with which to figure out that order from the ground up.

Schulman, however, undervalues how Hobbes's leviathan adopts the characteristics of the sovereign God as its replica, and how this act of mimicry reproduces theological structures within sovereignty. A mortal god is still a god, and the foundation of an orthotaxic soteriology. Interpreting the God of *Leviathan* as 'radically divested of content' also causes one to overlook the importance of Hobbes's engagement with what he calls 'demonology'—an idolatrous practice that, by elevating phantasmatic artifice over truth, threatens the downfall of order. While Hobbes (unlike Bodin) discounts the existence of actual demons and constructs them as mere figments of imagination, the threat these figments pose to the integrity of the sovereign body is quite real, and real in a fashion that replicates pre-existing demonological structures. Moreover, it gestures to a founding instability in Hobbesian sovereignty itself, through which it elides into the very demonological structures it exists to oppose.

The Counterfeit Kingdom

The eschatological horizon of the sovereign's purpose, while temporally distant, is a crucial feature of its condition of possibility. For Hobbes, the purpose of the sovereign is the maintenance of moral order, which will become eternalised at time's end, when the chosen will be given eternal life in God's Kingdom and the wicked will burn in eternal fire (1996: 306–20). The leviathan is thus simultaneously a simulacrum and (in some ways) a precursor of the thing it simulates. This ties into Hobbes's engagement with demonology in the fourth section of *Leviathan*, 'Of the Kingdome of Darknesse' (1996: 417–82). For Hobbes, demonology is a relic Christianity inherited from paganism, without any true scriptural basis. It is ultimately synonymous with idolatry, itself synonymous with a practice of misunderstanding the nature of reality and taking representations for the thing itself, a 'fabulous Doctrine concerning Daemons, which are but Idols, or Phantasms of the braine, without any reall nature of their own, distinct from humane fancy' (*ibid.*: 418). The political system that arises from demonology—the Kingdome of Darknesse—is a '*Confederacy of Deceivers, that to obtain dominion over men in this present world, endeavour by dark, and erroneous Doctrines to extinguish in them the Light, both of*

Nature, and of the Gospell. And so to dis-prepare them for the Kingdome of God to come (*ibid.*: 416–7; italics in original).¹² Hobbes directed his critique of demonology mainly at ‘false’ religious leaders (like the Pope) but also generally at Catholics, Presbyterians and other dissenting Protestants, who by identifying themselves with a higher truth promoted civil disorder by disrupting the authority of the sovereign as guarantor of civilisation (*ibid.*: 474–6). The sovereign wards against the deceptive phantasms of this demonology by guiding its subjects in accordance with God’s law. As Michael Krom summarises, so long as there exists a power that teaches demonological doctrines ‘and uses [related] practices to assert its power over men, they no longer are capable of being used by the sovereign for the purposes of promoting peace’ (2011: 159).

The purpose of the sovereign is to guard against demonological teachings that lead to civil unrest and the slippage of humanity into its ante/antipolitical state. Both James Martel (2007: 107–34) and Christopher Pye (1984) have noted, however, that Hobbes’s sovereign may itself be demonological, even the ‘epitome of demonology’ (Martel 2007: 112). For Martel, the sovereign’s demonological nature manifests in the ambiguity of the boundary Hobbes draws between idolatry and proper worship. The latter is not solely an act of veneration but an appreciation of things as they are, using our discernment to read the world accurately. Martel uses the example of the king’s stool—while the stool is a symbol of the sovereign’s power that power does not reside in the stool but in the sovereign. To offer veneration to the king is rightful worship (of the civil variety), to offer it to the stool is idolatry, it mistakes a representation of the thing for the thing itself. However, an issue arises for Martel in that knowing whether a worshipper is idolatrous or not is impossible to discern by external signs (*ibid.*: 120–2). The division between idol and proper is therefore unstable and given to elision. Meanwhile, for Pye the sovereign’s demonological potential manifests in its relation to spectacle. He analyses the sovereign as unifying its subjects through its image via a theatrical construction of visible power which can provoke awe and terror, exploring

¹² This capacity for deception forms the basis of one of Locke’s brief engagements with Satan in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Locke calls on Satan’s capacity to deceive as an argument against basing faith on miracles—since Satan ‘can transform himself into an Angel of Light. And they who are led by this Son of the Morning are as fully satisfied of this illumination, *i.e.* are so strongly persuaded, that they are enlightened by the Spirit of God, as any who is so’ (XIX.13/1999: 700–1).

how this coding of sovereign presence is in many ways indistinguishable from the trickery of idolatrous priests Hobbes is so eager to oppose. The ease with which true sovereignty segues into demonological counterfeit highlights the constructed nature of its truth—that it is *an* order constructed as Order *as such*, a particular masquerading as a universal.

As argued above, sovereignty itself is always-already an enforced illusion or prescriptive phantasm. Even within the remit of its purpose in Hobbes, however, the sovereign is both ‘a representative who...mirrors and mediates between contracting citizens’ and ‘an independent figure whose imposed force alone can tie men to their contracts’ (Pye 1984: 96). The sovereign sketches out a tautological relationship to its own sovereignty. It is produced by the very sovereignty it embodies and subsequently imposes in order to defy its dissolution. Additionally, since the sovereign possesses a will capable of defying the theological precepts on which it is created, the sovereign may come to hubristically replace the very God it allegedly represents, deviating from natural/divine law for its own demonic purposes. Authored to guard against a natural demonic, the sovereign becomes a counterfeit demonic. It will not serve either the contracting citizens or the divine order. In curious fashion, this possibility may be hinted at by the very title of *Leviathan* itself. In Christian demonologies, and for Bodin, Leviathan is often a synonym for evil or even Satan (Evrigenis 2014: 127; Tralau 2010a), and in 1589 Jesuit demonologist Peter Binsfeld named Leviathan as the demon governing the sin of envy (2013: 105). Envy is intimately bound to ideas of imitation, specifically to an imitation that seeks to deny and supplant its original (Brennan 2000: 160). While Hobbes linked his title choice to the Book of Job (1996: 220–1) the coincidence is noteworthy, and I return to the theopolitical implications of *Leviathan*’s title in the final chapter of this thesis.¹³ Even if, as Derrida remarks, the formulation of the state in Bodin and Hobbes marks the ‘possibility of a Christian foundation of politics’ (2009: 52–3), the idea that the leviathan may go rogue or have gone rogue (or, indeed, have always been rogue) in its duty to the sovereign deity it

¹³ Kim Ian Parker (2007) notes that while early Christian commentators associated the sea monster with Satan, by Hobbes’s time philologists had come to reinterpret ‘leviathan’ as a metaphor for society, based on a reading of the Hebrew consonants *l-w-h* as meaning ‘joining together’. Jacques Bouduc, a philologist whose work Hobbes might have known via his friend Marin Marsene, wrote that the term was used for kings because ‘of the way in which the inhabitants and subjects of the whole kingdom are gathered together in an ordered way’ (in *ibid.*: 433).

imitates is a possibility that reoccurs throughout the texts analysed in Chapters Four through Six. It figures a structural undecidability haunting any attempt to distinguish definitively between the sovereign and its demonological counterfeit.

THE BEAST, THE SOVEREIGN

The political theories of Hobbes shed light on the theopolitical constitution of the demonic other in relation to the sovereign (here figured as God, and through God the monarch and the state encoded on theological principles). On one level, the demon serves as the constitutive other to the sovereign, marking the outside that it defines and against which it is defined. This demonological other is coded as atavistic—it is antepolitical, a chaotic image of the state of nature, and also antipolitical, but antipolitical *as* antepolitical—the demonologies that threaten the true sovereign and the Christian commonwealth it forms are impure relics of its pagan past. The demon is thus sovereignty's other spatially and temporally—defined as periphery to a centre and past to a present (and future). However, while sovereignty's other, this demon is not strictly speaking 'nonsovereign'—if nonsovereignty is even possible. To draw on Derrida (2009: 76):

In a certain sense, there is no contrary of sovereignty, even if there are things other than sovereignty...the choice is not between sovereignty and nonsovereignty, but among several forms of partings, partitions, divisions, conditions that come along to broach a sovereignty that is always supposed to be indivisible and unconditional.

The relationship between Hobbesian demonology and Hobbesian sovereign illustrates this problematic, as the concepts slip into one another until the distinction between a 'true' and a 'counterfeit' sovereign becomes impossible to discern without God acting as eschatological arbiter. In this section, I explore this interrelation of sovereign and demon through the hermeneutical lens of Derrida's exploration of the relationship of beast and sovereign. By doing so, I resituate sovereignty's demonological foundation as constitutive.

In Want of a Foe

In the case studies examined later in this thesis, the discursive figure of the demon operates as the illegitimate other to a God constructed as seat of legitimate authority and power. This conception of ‘demonological evil’ is important to the theological origins of secular concepts of sovereign power, fragments of which I have outlined here. As noted above, the earthly sovereign (ruler or state, individual or collective) is figured as an extension or mimic of divine authority through adherence to the duties or guiding principles God bequeaths it (such as natural law). The commonwealth acts as a surrogate deity bringing illumination and moral guidance to its subjects, uniting them through a prescriptive phantasm of community that operates (in principle) teleologically. Ties between God and sovereign state are complex, and accordingly so are those between the state and God’s other—the demon.

The construction of the sovereign as simulacrum of divinity, with the power both to create and to stand above the law, implicitly but unintentionally opens it to accusations of demonological alignment once the law deviates from the ‘God-given’ and begins to chart another path. In post-Enlightenment reformulations by Romantic Satanists and other advocates of symbolic Satanism, the Devil’s adversarial relation to divine authority developed new valences once rejection of that authority became a political project, but this is mainly a moral reversal. God is still aligned with the state in this scenario, but the discourse has shifted so it is God and the status quo that are constructed as enemies to life and liberty. The demonification of the mortal god might be better seen in conspiracist frameworks that hold that the state’s authority has been corrupted into the service of demonic power, and which use eschatological paradigms to galvanise opposition to this corruption. The texts explored below draw heavily on the latter view. For adherents of these scenarios, the state, like Lucifer, has broken from the ‘divine’ authority that granted it legitimacy. It is the representation usurping the thing itself, and so must be opposed by agents of legitimate order. However, as my examination of Hobbes revealed, the possibility of the sovereign becoming its other may in fact be an intrinsic aspect of its being.

What can be discerned in the dualistic conflicts around state power—‘godly’ state versus ‘satanic’ rebels, ‘godly’ rebels versus ‘satanic’ state—is a conflict of

universals, competing orders each constructed as Order *in se*, as orthotaxy. However, while there may in fact be a plurality of orders (competing ideologies of economics, frameworks of ethics, national interests), within the narrative of the eschatological horizon there are two alone: the agents of divine order and those opposing it.¹⁴ As Koskiennemi clarifies, sovereignty is in part a prescriptive idea working to manifest what it thinks the world is or ought to be—‘to preserve or change a status quo, to support or oppose particular contestants’ (2010: 232). This makes the creation of an enemy central to the nature of a sovereignty claim, and indeed to the political generally—something Derrida notes and that Carl Schmitt made a precondition of the political as such. ‘The political presupposes the enemy,’ Derrida writes, ‘the possibility of war, the evil nature of man...and in the tradition of Hobbes, this theory of politics implies the evil tendencies of a man who is essentially afraid and who asks the state to protect him’, though he also notes that at least for Schmitt this enemy must be treated within the remit of the law, and not like a beast (2009: 73–4).

Laclau notes a similar relation, although does not name it as such. In ‘Beyond Emancipation’, he depicts a scenario in which a hypothetical national minority will construct all antagonistic forces as ‘*equivalent* threats to its identity’, an equivalence that identifies in such forces a commonality that is necessarily negative. They will be defined mainly through their opposition to the identity of the group, regardless of distinguishing features (1996: 14). This construction of commonality relates to a homogenising tendency in many of the religious apocalypticisms I explore below.¹⁵ As I will explore, such apocalypticisms treat ostensibly differentiated groups (which, while they might be at odds among themselves, are all antithetical to the orthotaxic structure asserted by the group(s) in question) as manifestations of a universal

¹⁴ The totalising aspects of apocalyptic discourse, which polarise all global relations into the kingdoms of light and darkness, is perhaps one reason it lends itself to syncretic blends with contemporary conspiracy theories, a defining feature of which is that the world is governed wholly by design rather than randomness; nothing happens by accident, nothing is as it seems, and everything is connected (Barkun 2003: 3).

¹⁵ Through treating these disparate texts as part of a broader framework I have, of course, imposed my own apocalyptic homogenisation upon a series of disparate groups, individuals, and positions. While I focus on significant discursive similarities regarding their constitutive demonologies, there are several key differences in position between (most obviously, their selection of constitutive foes) and within the case studies on topics like the destiny of the US, support for Israel, the relative danger of secularism or Islamism, the benevolence or malevolence of government institutions, and others. I analyse them together to draw attention to these differences while also tracing the underlying structural fixations in our ‘time of terror’.

negativity (that is, of demonic forces). While advocates of apocalyptic paradigms are not always national or religious minorities, and those analysed in this thesis are far from being so, Laclau's analogy is useful due to the self-construction of such groups as oppressed minorities of true believers assailed by all-encompassing forces of darkness—a commonplace feature of contemporary American evangelicals (Miller 2014). These forces—whose material instantiations are differentiated internally and externally, even opposed to one another—are all constructed as branches of a many-limbed but otherwise unified demonic assault on the orthotaxic structure of reality.

The existence of an enemy as a pre-condition of the political, however, is something worth exploring further. It unveils another breach in the indivisibility of sovereignty through sovereignty's structural relationship to the thing it is not, which determines its limits. Schmitt's enemy is a human and political enemy, one already coded into the sphere of the political and its ideologies of sovereignty, autonomy, and territory. While Derrida cites Schmitt's assertion that the enemy must be treated within the remit of the law, Derrida is acutely aware that it is what lies outside the law that is truly determinate of the law. The sovereign is one such limit—the one who creates and sits above the law, and has the right to suspend the law in the political state of exception, or theologically as the miracle, the sovereign decision of divine intervention. The other limit that Derrida identifies—which is also to say the limit that is the other—is that of the beast, the outlaw, or the rogue: 'It is always a matter of the law and of placing the other outside of the law. The law (*nomos*) is always determined from the place of some wolf' (2009: 96).

Derrida connects the 'beast' explicitly to the demonic only on a few occasions. The first is in *Rogues*, during a discussion of the 'rogue state' in which he relates that during the 1991 Gulf War, Saddam Hussein was referred to as the 'beast of Baghdad'. He remarks that this 'beast is not simply an animal but the very incarnation of evil, of the satanic, the diabolical, the demonic—a beast of the Apocalypse' (2004: 97). The other reference occurs during a discussion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions*. Derrida explores a divide Rousseau implies between 'Christians and philosophers' on the one hand, and 'beasts and wolves' on the other, as if to be the former is to cease to be the latter, equating the accusation of Rousseau's being an 'outlaw' (in French *loup-garou*, a werewolf) to the position of an 'Antichrist' (2009: 99–100). While there are

few explicit references, however, the discursive alignment of the beast and the demon can be teased from Derrida's analyses of the beast and the sovereign. As I have explored above, the demonic and its human allies ('witches', 'sodomites', 'Jews') form the constitutive outside to orthotaxy and the sovereignty at its heart. For Bodin, the demonic witch was other to all religio-political order. For Hobbes, civilisation was birthed by a quasi-secularised covenant leading humanity out of a demonic wilderness that continually threatens to encroach, tempting humans from rightful worship into a phantasmatic idolatry. For both, the demonological other marks the limit of Order *in se*—the moment it slip into chaos, but, at times, a chaos itself hauntingly alike to the order it supposedly denies.

When I connect my discussions of the demonic explicitly to Derrida's analysis of the figure of the beast, I do not mean (only) to infer those places where the demonic adopts bestial traits (as in depictions of demons with animalistic attributes) or is explicitly depicted as some species of beast, but to a broader idea of the beast as 'outlaw', as outside the law yet simultaneously constituted by and constitutive of it. As what resides at the limit of the law, the outlaw or rogue is in some fashion constitutive of the law. As Derrida rightly notes, the outlaw *qua* outlaw only exists because of that law against and outside of which it resides. The outlaw exists within the bind of an exclusion/inclusion, excluded from a law that defines its very existence and without which it could not exist. The demon is constructed in a similar fashion: it is defined by its opposition to God. Theologically, however, the relationship is more complex. Due to the totality of divine omnipotence and the preordained structure of history, nowhere is completely outside the law, and so the demon is forced to operate within a system it can neither escape nor overcome, but only wilfully struggle against. The eschatological horizon of this totality—the moment when the sovereign God ends the historical process by annulling all possibility of being or believing otherwise—is often the conceptual limit appealed to by the authors of the texts examined later. Believing the societies they live in as often irredeemably corrupted, they construct narratives in which it 'can only be saved by divine intervention' (Barkun 2010: 131). When the Beast becomes sovereign, city becomes wilderness—to be cultivated, tamed, fought against in order to reinforce the singularity of a being forever called into question.

There are several interrelated points that can be discerned from this discussion. Firstly, the demon's relationship *vis-à-vis* sovereignty is analogous to the beast or outlaw. The sovereign creates the law, not just a set of laws but an orthotaxy—a 'proper' arrangement of beings in relation to one another and to a teleological purpose. Both the sovereign and the demon occupy an 'outside' to this orthotaxy, defining its conceptual limits but also being defined by it. Without a law to be outlaw to, the demon *as* demon does not exist as such. Secondly, however, the discursive figure of the demon does not merely passively define this limit but actively strives to disrupt it, and in doing so troubles the very structures that unsuccessfully attempt to encapsulate it. The nature of this structure differs somewhat depending on the sovereign. For the sovereign God, this structure is the preordained and total structure of history, over which he acts as sole agent. The earthly sovereign exists as a rod for this structure of historical ordinance, using its power to organise its subjects in accordance with God's prescriptions for moral action and (thereby) toward an eschatological end and the untroubled and untroubleable orthotaxy it inaugurates. Finally, the demon's active opposition to teleological order gestures to a kind of autonomy *vis-à-vis* the law, but this autonomy is theologically complicated. Because the historical process has only a single agent—God, as absolute sovereign—demonic 'agency' only arises as an anachronistic corruption, resurgences of something ancient and superseded (and therefore always-already invalidated). These concepts ultimately coalesce around what I earlier referred to as the duality of the demonic, in its ability to be both the natural demonic, an originary chaos that defines sovereignty's boundaries temporally and spatially, and the counterfeit demonic, which cloaks itself in the semblance of orthotaxy and may, under certain circumstances, be able to efface the original, thereby becoming in some sense true or a truth.

Making Truth at the Limits of the Lie

As I discussed in the preceding chapter, the figure of the demon is structurally denied the capacity to create. Nonetheless, the demon serves a constitutive function with regards to the systems that exclude it. Its exclusion is a (co-)creation, constituting the ground of the system's discursive construction. The demon operates via the co-option and corruption of these systems, notably religious ones, and this section explores the

demonic's structural capacity to corrupt but not create truth as related to its theological construction as a force of the 'lie'. Identifications of the demonic force with a form of cosmic deceit predate Christianity (Lincoln 2007, 2009) but are manifested within it as privation theory—the idea of the demon as manifesting an/as ontological and moral absence. While this absence always had a political component, this component became violently instantiated in the European witch-hunts, in which the witch was figured as 'anti-religious' dissident, whose alleged adherence to God's Other threatened the unity and unificatory potentiality of (theo)political sovereignty.

Alignment of the demon with 'the lie'—with lies, deceit, and falsehood as not merely moral but fundamentally ontological principles—directly relates to what I earlier termed the 'counterfeit demonic', the demonic as a (perhaps unrecognisable) replica of the system it opposes. As Derrida explains it, a lie 'has no sense and the interdiction that institutes its concept would be unthinkable' without the 'sacral horizon' of truth: outside truth, it is 'impossible to condemn or even to determine that there is a lie' (2002b: 39). As a periphery is always determined from the centre, a lie is always determined from the position of a truth or at least a discourse of truth. This means that the lie is constructed as necessarily subordinate and, like the demon it is theologically aligned with, unable to create on its own terms. Lie *qua* lie cannot found a structure, or at least not a universal structure. Gilles Deleuze also remarks on this, noting that 'the lie cannot be thought as formally universal without contradiction, since it at least implies people who believe in it, and who, in believing in it, are not lying' (2008a: x).

Deleuze here raises two key points, the inability of the lie *qua* lie to be thought of as universal, and the connection between 'a lie' as an idea and the performative act of lying. In 'History of the Lie: A Prolegomena' (2002b: 28–70) Derrida is careful to highlight the unethical nature of lying as act of conscious deception. He emphasises intentionality, setting lie apart from error and other types of nontruth, claiming that there is not 'a lie' but 'a lying'. Thus, its reverse is not strictly truth (whose antithesis is falsity) but rather veracity or veridiction: truth-*speaking*. This veridiction, however, is also highly contingent and performative. Relating the performativity of veridiction to the creation of geopolitical borders and the legitimacy of sovereign states, Derrida (*ibid.*: 51) writes:

When performatives succeed, they produce a truth whose power sometimes imposes itself forever: the location of a boundary, the installation of a state are always acts of performative violence that, if the conditions of the international community permit it, create the law, whether durably or not, where there was none or no longer any law, where the law did not yet impose itself or else was not yet strong enough. In creating the law, this performative violence—which is neither legal nor illegal—creates what is then held to be legal truth, the dominant and juridically incontestable public truth. [Where are the ‘true’ boundaries now] in ex-Yugoslavia...or in Chechnya...in Israel, [or] Zaire? Who tells the truth and who lies in these areas? For better and for worse, this performative dimension *makes the truth*...It therefore imprints its irreducible historical dimension on both veracity and the lie.

Derrida does not explore the theopolitical concept of the demon in this ‘History of the Lie’—oddly, perhaps, since his brief reflections on the demonic beast in the contexts of Saddam Hussein or Rousseau are highly attentive to the construction and enforcing of borders (social, political, moral, theological). His commentary is nevertheless illuminating. In discourses of apocalyptic eschatology ‘truth’ and ‘lie’ refer not (only) to performative acts but (also) to ontological conditions of reality. Yet the division between these discourses is enacted by such performative acts, dividing individuals and groups into camps of light and darkness, good and evil.

As we saw with Bodin and again with Hobbes, the concept of the sovereign will is inextricable from its determination of sacred truth from demonological falsity. The sovereign is constructed as the guarantor of truth in opposition to the lies spoken and embodied by its demonological other(s). Sovereignty inscribes a boundary by its coming-into-existence that attempts to demarcate an indelible division between itself and an-other. Yet, as Derrida writes elsewhere, ‘As soon as truth is a limit or has limits, its own...truth would be a certain relation to what terminates or determines it’, and this demarcation of boundaries creates truth’s relation to its own transgression; it is constituted by the possibility of its contravention (1993: 2, 11). The sovereign thus creates its other (here, the demonic) at the moment of creation—the Devil ‘sins from the beginning’ (I John 3:8), after all—but once in existence the demonic constitutes the limits of its sovereign maker, defining it by its own wilful exclusion. This is most clearly illustrated above in my discussion of Hobbesian demonology, which threatens the integrity of legitimate sovereignty by existing as the antipolitical approximation of

its own political order: a ‘counterfeit world order’, to borrow Paul Boyer’s phrase for the end-times empire of Antichrist (2000: 175).

This relationship between the counterfeit and the thing it counterfeits gestures to a liminality that is also figured in the idea of lying as a performative speech act, especially when analysed in the context of demonology. The concept that lying is an act of intentional deception, false testimony that is not necessarily factually false but that is intended to deceive, means one can technically lie while speaking (parts of) the truth (Derrida 2002b: 31). The lie is not always falsity, but can be an appropriation and subversion of truths.¹⁶ Further, attempts to align truth with stability or eternity—as is usually the case with apocalyptic eschatologies—are problematised once we account, following Derrida, that while the classical philosophical definition of truth might be the ‘indefinite survival of the “stable”,’ there is no reason why a lie or its desired effect might not remain undetected unto infinity (*ibid.*: 68). The (often disavowed) realisation of this possibility occupies many of the spiritual warfare and apocalyptic texts examined later in this thesis, necessitating narratives of the proximity of the end of history. Faced with the idea that what they construe as ‘the lie’ might (im)possibly become an enduring but also necessarily contingent truth—and thus maybe signal the contingency of truth in general—the texts’ authors posit the imminence of an end to contingency as such, brought forth by a sovereign act that ends time and change and welcomes the immutability of an eternalised orthotaxy. However, this (im)possibility, as I will show in later chapters, continually haunts their narratives, even—or perhaps especially—when they fail to acknowledge it. As de Certeau poignantly notes, ‘All stability rests on unstable balances that are disturbed by every intervention intended to reinforce them...The need for certainty is also the admission of the fear of losing it’ (2000: 2, 113).

¹⁶ Michel de Certeau discusses this hybridity of truth and falsehood explicitly in relation to the demon in *The Possession at Loudun* (2000). Analysing the 1634 Loudun possessions, de Certeau discusses the subversive appropriation of language within the context of the exorcists’ attempts to coerce (the demons possessing) the Ursuline nuns to testify in accordance with established demonological lore. Drawing on Aquinas, he remarks that ‘one must not believe the demon even if he says true things’, and categorises the demon as the ‘sphinx of a truth mixed with lies’ (2000: 148).

The (Im)Possibility of Reigning in Hell

The law is always determined from the place of some demon (to appropriate and alter Derrida's phrase). This demon is the periphery that constitutes and is constituted by the centre, bound in a structural necessity without which it loses all meaning, but it is also a counterfeit centre which attempts to infiltrate, subvert, and ultimately usurp the true centre. It is both the anarchic freedom of the antepolitical and the counterfeit (anti)political state. The structural potential for the demonic counterfeit to replace the original is one of the underlying structural conflicts I will explore in my case studies. In response to this counterfeit, the writers I analyse appeal to an absolute, metaphysical arbiter of truth (God) that finds its fulfilment at the end of history and in the prophetic structure of time, which is always-already determined *sub specie aeternitatis*. Thus, while the demonological other might gain control over the physical or even spiritual world, its sovereignty is always a sovereignty of the *pseudos*, of the lie—a pseudo-sovereignty predestined to end (like all mortal sovereignties) at a time appointed by a power greater than it: God, true sovereign and agent of history. Due to the discursive construction of an eschatological horizon that forecloses on (all possibility of) its rebellion, the demonological other is structurally prevented from creating its own laws, its truth in the form of an enduring stability. The Satan of *Paradise Lost* might declare that it is better to reign in hell than serve in heaven, but his *non serviam* will have always-already been a hollow claim born out of wilfulness.

Therefore, to a certain degree—and within the broader theological paradigm of which demonology is a-part—there has never been any alternative for the demon but to serve. Even its rebellion is, in a sense, accounted for by the very structure it rebels against because that structure is the totality of history and the agent that controls it. The dilemma MacIntyre noted regarding the political mission of Milton's Satan, that he 'both has to and cannot reject' the hierarchy of his origin (2003: 97), indicates a larger problematic regarding the discursive construction of demonological rebellion against sovereign power (whether god, king, state, or citizen). The 'demon' only has meaning insofar as it exists in a discursive totality it opposes, cannot escape from, and is preordained to fail at overcoming. However, the demonological other continues to be threatening to sovereign order. It continues to return, perhaps even

seemingly triumph, thus necessitating the sovereign's apocalyptic intervention. As Derrida reminds us, 'the choice is not between sovereignty and nonsovereignty, but among several forms of partings, partitions, divisions' (2009: 76). In the ontological and moral order of apocalypticism, the 'lie' is always a designation that comes from the outside. It is always the marker of an other to a site of truth, it cannot be thought as universal as lie. Thus, it must become transfigured into an other truth. This possible impossibility is conditional upon an already-existing instability in the structure of sovereign order, however. Namely, that sovereignty was always-already divided and divisible. The demon is a creation—and constitutive co-creator—of that self-division, manifesting as the embodiment of its instabilities. Demonological forces manifest as agents of temptation and deviation from what is constructed as the proper hierarchy of being, but this temptation is also, crucially, the staking of a sovereign counter-claim. I will explore this counter-claim as it plays out in a number of distinct but interrelated ways over the following chapters, each one sketching its own relationship to notions of sovereign indivisibility and revealing, in their own way, its intrinsic divisibility.

What is at stake here, and in the case studies analysed in the coming chapters, is the nature of sovereign (in)divisibility, its denial and its prescriptions. While coded as sovereignty's other and denied the capacity to reign on a structural level, demonological others continually stake counter-claims that threaten to undermine the legitimacy of orthotaxy's self-proclaimed singularity. The discourses examined in this thesis are, for the most part, explicitly theological, but this explicitly theological structure is not the only one that is problematised. Rather, any structure that asserts a mythic unity to the sovereign will always be troubled by the things it excludes yet simultaneously requires to define itself—by its demons. These demons will continue to trouble sovereignty's claims to indivisibility because they are constitutive of those claims and the necessity of those claims. Their discourses signal transferences of 'fealty', agreements of 'mutual contract' beyond a divine covenant.

In the face of these counter-claims, which are multiple within and between one another, the authors examined in coming chapters reassert the teleological structure of history as final arbiter of truth. By doing so, they attempt to reduce these other claims to demonic heresies that will end not only in failure but in perdition. They are enemies not of an order but of Order *in se*. Their speech is Satan's speech, which as

Maggi discussed, threatens to devour both speakers and listeners like fire (2001: 233). To save creation, Satan's 'devastating syllogism' must not be allowed completion. His human agents must be stifled, and this stifling is not just an abstraction. Like the early modern witches, the demonological others named in the texts examined below are real groups, individuals, nations, and cultures: Muslims who refuse to surrender all that makes them Muslim (Chapter Four), gay, lesbian and transgender people, and all women and men who will not adhere to prescribed gender roles (Chapter Five), and those who through science and technology dare to question the boundaries of the 'human' (Chapter Six). The existence of these groups is constructed within the texts I examine as disrupting the orthotaxic structure of creation; for the preservation of that structure, they must be excluded and eliminated.

In this chapter and the first, I have conducted an exploration of the relationship of the demonological other through interrelated aspects of its constructed opposition to orthotaxy: deviation, sovereignty, and (sovereign) creation. My analysis lays the groundwork for an exploration of more contemporary demonic others, more present darkneses, which constitute the body of this thesis. The following chapter deals with the confluence of events and ideologies that lead to the context in which these present darkneses are constructed. While the authors I analyse below code their struggle as part of the timeless battlefield of sovereign God against the demonic foe, their writings arise from several interrelated theologico-political contexts: American Exceptionalism and other hallmarks of American civil religion, the geopolitics of the Cold War and the conditions of its end, the evolution of evangelical politics and the Christian Right, the cultural logic of late capitalism and, most recently, the War on Terror and the discourse of rogue states that both preceded and suffuses it.

CHAPTER THREE

Citizens of Paradise

Neoconservatism, Evangelicalism, and the Theopolitics of Identity

In Paradise Lost, heaven and the Divine have a fixity and serene stasis that contrasts sharply with the restlessness and frenetic bustle of hell and with the volatility of Satan....Satan's Protean habit of suddenly altering his appearance expresses more than a tactical need for disguises. It attests deep anxiety about continuity itself; it manifests demonic rejection of the idea of permanence figured in heaven.

— John S. Tanner (1992: 136)

In Book IV of *Paradise Lost*, Satan comes to Eden. Initially, he prowls about its walls. Eventually tiring of circumambulation, he bounds over them like a ‘prowling wolf’ (IV.183). This is not his only bestial modality, however. As Tanner analyses, Satan’s state in paradise is protean. He shifts between animal forms: a cormorant, an unnamed quadruped grazer, a toad, and the infamous serpent (1992: 136). In a place he does not belong, Satan passes as those that do. For Tanner, these transmutations are not just tactical but express the internal force of his non-belonging and suggest Satan’s fitful mutability reflects anxiety over the celestial continuity he rejects. Yet it is paradise whose continuity is threatened by the trespassing of this passing figure. Satan traverses its borders, adopts the semblance of its occupants, unfixing its fixity. His dissent will occasion the descent.

As the preceding chapters explored, the demonic is the constitutive outside of orthotaxy. It marks the site of what should not be—a deviation from proper order resulting in both moral and ontological absence. By doing so the demonic constitutes

and contests the orthotaxic structure, placing an order constructed as timeless and *a priori* ordered and unified in relation to its (im)possible transgression. Not merely excluded, the demon threatens sovereign ipseity through its exclusion by defining its spatio-temporal, moral, and ontological limits—borders necessarily transgressed by their conditions of possibility. In the proceeding chapters, I examine the mechanisms of this transgression and contestation. In this chapter, I will explore the construction of the order that these demonological others (are constructed to) contest: a model of unitary, immutable, and authentic identity that dictates who—unlike Satan—is permitted to be a citizen of paradise. This construction of legitimate identity (of legitimate citizenship) I analyse is an American one. While it has a long genealogy, it emerges in its contemporary form in a specific historical context: the crucible of the Cold War and the conditions of its aftermath. Analysing this timeframe, I explore the cultural discourses that lead to the construction of a sovereign ipseity, an ideal(ised) citizen—upholder of traditional (religious, generally Christian) morals, hard-working capitalist, independent, patriotic, and usually white, male and heterosexual—through the construction of demonological others—gay, lesbian, and feminist activists, socialists, and welfare-leaches (often identified with lower-class African-Americans). Like Satan in Eden, these others are constructed as threats to paradise’s continuity. Their dissent—political, moral, ontotheological—is seen as heralding descent.

I orient my analysis of the emergence of this identity around the geo- and theo-political event of singularity that neoconservative thinker Charles Krauthammer called the ‘unipolar moment’—that moment at the end of the Cold War when the United States found itself as sole world superpower. The apparent dawn of an era which would be governed by ‘American strength and will—the strength and will to lead a unipolar world, unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce it’ (Krauthammer in Adib-Moghaddam 2011: 204). Centred on this singularity, I chart the interrelated development of two ideological trajectories: neoconservatism and right-wing evangelicalism.¹ While it might at first appear odd to analyse these ideological movements side by side, they share a number of distinctive commonalities and geo/theopolitical trajectories. Religion—or at least religious

¹ This thesis does not focus on the evangelical left, though it is an important factor in the evolution of American identity. For recent studies of this movement, see Swartz (2012a, 2012b) and Lee (2013).

morality and language—constituted a core part of the neoconservative ideological framework. Moreover, as Gary Dorrien outlines, early neoconservatives were ‘repulsed’ by ‘the ascension of antiwar activism, feminism, and moralistic idealism’ in the Democratic party, believing it had ‘sold out’ patriotic and anticommunist liberalism in favour of a ‘politics of guilt-breeding, anti-interventionist, anti-American idealism’ (2004: 7), a utopianism neoconservative godfather Irving Kristol identified as ‘the main source of all evil in the world’ (in Beinart 2010: 208). This socio-political stance was mirrored by conservative evangelicalism, which during and after the Cold War also sought a return to what it perceived as ‘traditional’ values (Boyer 1992). The movements worked from shared grounding principles toward a similar end: the moral/spiritual regeneration of America through the wholesale rejection of liberationist projects, equal distribution of wealth, and a ‘corrupted’ academy.

By analysing the ways that neoconservatism and evangelicalism constructed themselves in the domestic and international arena, I chart the gradual solidification of a specific construction of American authenticity that is reified, reinforced, and replicated in the texts I analyse in subsequent chapters. The unity and characteristics of this identity are necessarily reliant upon a legion of demonised self-consolidating others, which draw on the specificity of the historical moments examined here and on the generalised paradigm of the demonic other to sovereignty I discussed in Chapter Two. Similarly to the paradigm I assessed there, these others are made manifest as aberrations in an orthotaxy, deviations from an authentic order of being that is also a teleo-eschatology. In turn, this discussion will lay the contextual groundwork for the case studies analysed in proceeding chapters.

This context is one conditioned by what William Connolly (2008) terms the ‘evangelical-capitalist resonance machine’, a religio-politico-economic assemblage of rampant capitalism, evangelical Christianity and providential history which creates ‘*affinities of spirituality*’ across creedal divides. It has multiple elements, including news media, sermons, investment priorities, state policies, and practices of consumption. Each amplifies the others, not (always) through direct causal relations but rather by ‘energized complexities of mutual imbrication and interinvolvement’ (*ibid.*: 40). The (theo)logic of this machine, already operational, is then filtered

through the prism of the 2000–2008 Bush administration: a period in which, in Simon Dalby's words (2010: 99), the world became figured as one

of danger, of threats to political order and Christianity itself, of decadent liberal politics in danger of appeasing threats, Islamic or otherwise...[A world of] insecurities and struggles to overcome numerous evils, perpetual geographies of danger requiring vigilance.

The mechanisms of the resonance machine and the events of this recent history—the Cold War, culture wars, discourse of rogue states, 9/11 and the global war that followed it—are also joined by other, mythic and/or historic, constructions: biblical narratives past and to come, and historic events, like the settling and/or independence of the US, that adopt symbolic power sometimes eclipsing their Biblical counterparts. This last cluster of ideologies comprises what has been called American civil religion. Taken together, these theologico-political assemblages create the soil from which the construction of a vision of authentic and singular identity emerges.

In order to interrogate the development of this authenticity I analyse several historical moments that can be divided around the unipolar moment. On the far side of the Cold War, these include the development of neoconservative ideology as an economic model that also sought the re-moralisation of American society and the increased politicisation of the Protestant evangelical movement. By analysing these movements, I chart the construction of an idea of American authenticity around the two pillars of Capitalism and Religion (primarily Protestant Christianity) as one half of a binary opposition with the construction of the Soviet Union as a demonic, communistic other. I then examine how these movements adjusted to the end of the Cold War, particularly the removal of their central demonological other, Communist Russia, in relation to which much of their identities had been forged. In my analysis, I investigate how this readjustment manifested through attempts to safeguard American dominance abroad—to preserve the unipolarity of its new world order in the face of increasing globalisation and transnational flow—and to reinforce a monolithic culture domestically in response changing social norms. Before addressing these moments directly, however, it is necessary to explore American civil religion, which links these historical developments to a discursive genealogy of messianic identity construction.

PARADISE HAS WALLS: SOVEREIGNTY AND CIVIL RELIGION

In order to contextualise the construction of (the) American identity that I will be examining it is necessary to explore American civil religion. It is possible to tie the politically-conservative, religiously-fundamentalist construction of authenticity that I analyse into what Gilles Kepel referred to in the mid-nineties as ‘the revenge of God’ (1994)—a resurgence of (fundamentalist) religiosity just when religion had allegedly vanished from the public sphere. However, to do so would be to omit or downplay the way that the interplay of religious and secular belief has conditioned negotiations of American identity since its settlement. As elsewhere, the rise to political prominence of particular religio-political ideologies in the US is closely tied to a perceived failure of the secular state to constitute, as José Casanova suggests, ‘the quasi-transcendental site of human flourishing’, as per the ideologies of secularisation (2011: 57). This need to re-establish a ‘site of human-flourishing’ where none is seen to exist occupies a large part of my analysis below, but it does not occur in a vacuum. The rise of both neoconservatism and evangelicalism in the forms they took would not have been possible without the preexistence of ‘civil religion’: that melding of religious imagery and doctrine with secular national politicking that has played a key role through much of US history, bound both to ideas of American Exceptionalism and to distinctly-American evolutions in Christian eschatology, such as the ‘Rapture’.

(Re)Making Histories

Robert Bellah coined the term ‘American civil religion’ in his seminal 1967 article ‘Civil Religion in America’. Bellah did not offer a comprehensive definition of the phenomenon, but analysed a variety of American cultural practices in light of their unity in a shared religio-political tradition that had its focus on the nation, arguing that it constituted

a genuine apprehension of universal and transcendent religious reality as seen in or, one could almost say, as revealed through the experience of the American people...the American civil religion is not the worship of the American nation but an understanding of the American experience in the light of ultimate and universal reality (1974: 33, 39–40).

Since Bellah, numerous scholars have offered working definitions of what is meant by ‘civil religion’. John Coleman defines it as ‘the religious dimension of the polity’ and ‘the set of beliefs, rites, and symbols which relates a man’s role as citizen and his society’s place in space, time, and history to the conditions of ultimate existence and meaning’ (J.A. Coleman 1970: 67, 70). Gail Gehrig frames it more succinctly as ‘the religious symbol system which relates the citizen’s role and American society’s place in space, time, and history to the conditions of ultimate existence and meaning’ (1981: 18). Nicholas Demerath and Rhys Williams note that civil religion ‘denotes a religion of the nation, a non-sectarian faith that has as its sacred symbols those of polity and national history’ (1985: 154), and Marcela Cristi, expanding the term beyond its limited applicability to the US, notes that civil religions ‘sacralize certain aspects of civic life by means of public rituals and collective ceremonies’ (2001: 3). Recently, Rhys Williams summarises the phenomenon as one ‘composed of understandings and practices that treat the socio-political collectivity as having sacred dimensions and finds both its collective identity and its history religiously meaningful’ (2013: 240). Adopting a primarily political reading, Niels Reeh summarises civil religion as a state’s collective remembrance and obliteration of its own history, which defines its national character via the artefacts it chooses to commemorate or to efface: ‘It is a continuous cultural construction...The definition of America, what is American and what is not, is created through a contested interpretation of history’ (2009: 90).

Thus, while civil religion is often considered a source of American ideological unity, it is often fractured in itself. Cristi and Dawson have noted that both Christian and Utilitarian ideologies coexist inside it, and are usually not fully reconciled (2007). Both Martin Marty (1974) and Robert Wuthnow (1988) posit competing forms of civil religion, one ‘prophetic and critical’, the other a celebratory quasi-religious nationalism. Despite such internal differences, civil religion operates primarily as a legitimising device in American civil life: a discursive structure that allows religio-political actors to site themselves in traditions of shared symbolism and deploy such symbolism for specific religio-political ends. These ends are figured in accordance with always-already contested visions of America’s past, present and future. Such contestation, however, should not blind us to power differentials in the designation of authentic histories.

Often framed in terms of a championing of ‘American values’ such as personal freedom, religious and ethnic pluralism, and capitalism (sometimes placed under the auspices of personal freedom, but often considered its own value), civil religion’s construction(s) of *what* is authentically American also functions as a normalising force that necessarily constructs a model of those persons and groups in whom or which such authenticity is instantiated. Reeh discusses this in terms of the active construction of the ‘We’ of ‘We, the People’, a declaration he compares to an Austinian speech act in that it constructs the identity of the speaker (here, the nation) internally and externally, within America itself and as a projection to other nations (2009: 79). This ‘we’ necessitates a ‘them’. Williams has discussed this communal self-other division in relation to the War on Terror and the election of Barack Obama as President, noting that civil religion often hinges on ideas of religion and race that encode an idea of American authenticity as white and Christian. This construct, he holds, is at odds with scholarship that stresses the idea of civil religion as promoting a tolerant, pluralistic worldview (2013). However, Williams’ assessment fails to take into account the ways that the image of America as tolerant and pluralist is reliant on its opposition to nations and cultures construed as less tolerant and less pluralist, and (whether explicitly or implicitly) less white and less Christian.

Apocalyptic Substrates

This coding of race and religion as constituent of ‘authentic’ national identity, particularly since the events of 9/11 reveal prominent areas of American civil religion, including whether America is—or ought to be—a ‘Christian’ country. As historian Eric Foner notes, the high level of religious faith in America combined with its ‘religious roots’ in the enduring discourse of the pilgrim fathers leads to a propensity for Americans to code their enemies in the language of cosmic struggle, not merely as two opponents in a conflict but as embodiments of ‘good’ (America) and ‘evil’ (its enemies). Linked to this is a notion stemming both from civil religion and (more recently) from the ideologies of the Cold War, in which America is figured as the ‘last best hope of liberty’ that recasts its enemies as the foes of freedom itself (in Asad 2003: 7).

This notion has particular consequences in the wake of the ‘unipolar moment’ that I examine later in this chapter, the moment after the collapse of the Soviet Union when the United States found itself as sole regnant superpower. America in this scenario becomes both totalised—its reach is ostensibly global—and simultaneously isolated—it is the sole bastion of power: the US attempts to maintain its undivided sovereignty while fragmenting that same sovereignty across the globe. Erin Runions comments on the US’s propensity to filter all global relations through itself, noting that even in a contemporary world of transnational flow and the fragmentation of national sovereignty, the US tends to figure these processes only through the prism of its own ‘sovereignty and superiority’ (2014: 5). Drawing on Wendy Brown, she notes that the US

theatrically maintains a sense of bordered cohesion, through military walls and homeland security. Although the nation demands the immigration and cheap labor provided by globalization, it polices movement and tries at least to look as if it is fortified against the deterritorializations and political breakdown in national sovereignty (*ibid.*).

This narrative creates a phantasmatic construction of a walled enclosure—a *paradise* in its etymological sense (Oles 2015: 40). The creation of this American paradise is inextricable from a discourse of sovereignty. In Brown’s words, within this walled enclosure ideas of sovereignty, national as well as theological, become ‘the source, condition, and protector of civic life’ (2010: 58). Reeh points to this understanding by defining civil religion as a ‘state mythology that simultaneously defines and legitimises the sovereignty of the American state internally as well as externally’ (2009: 93), and Runions contends that ‘It is this loss of superior sovereignty within a global economy that produces moral panic, fuelling a messianic pursuit of war, certainty, religion, and sexual regulation’ (2014: 6). The building of walls (whether actual or metaphoric) around a construction of the ‘true community’ creates the very need to police those walls, guarding against the other beyond its walls. Arguably, it is the act of building that creates such others. Such others threaten to infiltrate the boundaries of sovereignty much as Satan did the stable continuities of Eden.

This imaginary of the walled enclosure, of America as paradise, feeds into the civil religious notions of the US as the beacon of freedom, a ‘light unto all nations’, which fuels the pursuit of a global dominance grounded on Christo-American values.

This ties closely into both Christian messianism and to a secular-liberal discourse of reason that focuses on the expansion of an enlightened centre into a dark periphery. Theologian Catherine Keller has argued that an ‘apocalyptic unconscious’ operates within the field of US imperialism, which she calls a ‘messianic imperialism’. This unconscious justifies extreme violence as a safeguard against a number of others: ‘barbarians’, ‘terrorists’, ‘infidels’, and ‘unbelievers’ (2005: 37–8) who are construed as radically alien to what are discursively constructed as ‘authentic’ American values (capitalism, democracy, heterosexuality).² Runions notes that when such messianism becomes infused into ostensibly secular politics they create an ‘affective theological force field’ which raises the stakes on decision making and infuses such decisions with a spiritual import that galvanises support (2014: 19).

These trends parallel my earlier analysis of the demonic other to sovereignty, in which the demonic constitutes the excluded other to an orthotaxic structure that attempts to create or maintain both an order and the *telos* of that order. Influenced by the ideological struggles of the Cold War and the capitalist triumphalism of its end, the demonological discourses I examine in the following chapters embed themselves in a specific Christo-capitalistic orthotaxic structure that utilises the language of evil and of the demon—figural or literal—to discursively construct the self-consolidating others of that orthotaxy, those who wait beyond the walls of what they hold America is or ought to be. However, as suggested, this *is* or this *ought* is a product of histories that have been adopted and adapted for specific purposes. The following sections chart a genealogy of the *is/ought* formula I examine in the remainder of this thesis.

² In some ways, this model also infiltrates secular liberal models of violence. Talal Asad has drawn on Margaret Canovan in his discussion of the (perhaps) paradoxical violence of liberalism (as opposed to illiberal regimes) as a conflict between light and dark: ‘It is the violence of universalizing reason itself’, he writes. ‘For to make an enlightened space, the liberal must continually attack the darkness of the outside world that threatens to overwhelm that space’ (2003: 59). He elaborates on this violence of reason elsewhere, noting that ‘[r]eason requires that false things be either proscribed and eliminated, or transcribed and re-sited as objects to be seen, heard, and touched by the properly educated senses’ (*ibid.* 35).

NEOCONSERVATISM AND THE GEOPOLITICS OF EVIL

In 1960 the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr wrote that ‘we [America] are embattled with a foe who embodies all the evils of a demonic religion’ (2005: 21). This statement embodies many of the sentiments that abounded during the Cold War, and gestures toward its apocalyptic dimensions: Ronald Reagan’s binarisation of a ‘free world’ against an ‘evil empire’, a formula which blended religio-ethical motifs and militant patriotism (Chernus 2012), and the distinctly secular apocalypticism arising from nuclear proliferation and the strategic logic of ‘mutually assured destruction’ (MAD), among others (Lahr 2007; Weigert 1988; Wójcik 1996). It was also the period that saw both the birth of the neoconservative movement and the rise of the Christian evangelical right, two movements whose ideologies—at times disparate, at others united—are particularly important for understanding the framework in which contemporary American spiritual warfare discourses operate. While these movements reacted to similar events, institutions and ideologies, and converged on several crucial issues regarding domestic and foreign policy, they were mostly distinct trajectories in the American public and political spheres. The rise of the evangelical right will be considered directly below. This section focuses on the growth of neoconservatism in the Cold War. Neoconservatism, as argued by Majia Holmer Nadesan, differs from other neoliberal economics in its desire to institute a parallel re-moralisation of society by using ‘Judeo-Christian’ ethics ‘to combat moral decline and economic malefaction’ (2008: 141). These ethics, at least initially, were often severed from the theological contexts of their traditions, adopting the guise of a ‘traditional’, ‘natural’ morality rather than as part of specific religio-historical frameworks.

Nativity Scene

The story told by the founding figures of neoconservatism is that the movement originated in the 1960s, among a group of disaffected liberal, primarily-Jewish intellectuals in New York, who coalesced around opposition to sixties counterculture and the realignment of political liberalism with the expansion of the welfare system under President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty and Great Society programmes.

While they were in favour of state intervention in some aspects, they believed the expansion of the welfare state created a culture of dependency which ‘corrupted the souls of its recipients’ (Kristol in Nadesan 2008: 40). Thus, while issues of foreign policy were present from the early days of neoconservatism, the focus was mainly domestic.³ The shift from this focus to one oriented around the interventionist foreign policy of the George H. W. Bush government is part of the neoconservative story, tied to the Cold War and its end. Some scholars have contended that the shifts that characterise neoconservative thought make it impossible to discuss ‘neoconservatism’ as a singular ideology, only of ‘neoconservatives’ who shared certain intellectual commonalities (Dorrien 2004). Justin Vaïsse, in an attempt to circumvent this issue, splits the movement into three distinct ‘ages’ characterised by particular positions and personalities, with the focus on foreign policy emerging during the second, in the late 1970s and 1980s, with the establishment of the Committee for the Present Danger and beginning-takeover of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) in 1976, and the 1981 election of President Reagan which first brought them into a position of prominent political power (2010: 149-219). While Vaïsse’s dispensational model has flaws (for example, it fails to consider the role of the ‘culture wars’ in the domestic sphere both during and after the Cold War, which he acknowledges but does not analyse in detail), I find it useful since it emphasises both continuity and rupture in the neoconservative paradigm. His third age, which begins with the maturation of neoconservative thought in the mid-1990s, is considered later. My focus here will be on the first and second.

The ‘godfather of neoconservatism’ is usually given as Irving Kristol (M.S. Joyce 1995: 68). One of the original group, Kristol was a key player in constructing a neoconservative network through its first and second ages and cofounder (with Daniel Bell) of the journal *The Public Interest* (1965–2002), which served as a platform for neoconservative critique of ‘liberal missteps’ in the realms of ‘social programs,

³ It is common to refer to neoconservatives as a ‘movement’. However there are several issues with considering it as such, the first primarily being its lack of a formal organisational body with which it might readily be identified. As Dorrien elaborates, neoconservatives lack a core ‘creed or self-referential organisations’ and in many ways constitutes ‘more of an impulse or current of thought than a self-referring movement; Kristol aptly calls it a “persuasion.”’ (2004: 16). However, he continues ‘it has spawned and taken over so many institutes, think tanks, and magazines, and wielded so much influence in national Republican politics, that movement language is unavoidable’ (*ibid.*). It is thus possible to consider neoconservatism a ‘movement’ *sensu lato*, as a current of thought that assimilates disparate individuals, rather than as a structural organisation or ‘movement’ *sensu stricto*.

affirmative action, and the culture wars' (Vaïsse 2010: 5, 203). In 1976, Kristol was the first of the neoconservatives to join the AEI, the institution which would become a bastion of neoconservative thought in its third age. He was also the first to make the transition from the Democrat to the Republican Party. Two other prominent figures were Norman Podhoretz, who became editor of the Jewish *Commentary Magazine* in 1960, increasingly turning it into a mouthpiece for neoconservative ideology, and Jeane Kirkpatrick, who served as ambassador to the UN under Reagan until 1985 and is strongly associated with the ideology regarding the irreversibility of totalitarianism and the need for strategic support of authoritarian regimes against the Soviet Union (Abrams 2010; Goldfarb 1991).

For Kirkpatrick, the ideological praxis of totalitarianism was bound up in distortions of reality and the devotion of those distortions to the image of a 'higher truth' embodied by the totalitarian state. Drawing on Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, she saw the Soviet system as being subsumed by 'the lie', a self-perpetuating strategy of deception and self-deception powered by violence (1988: 102). Kirkpatrick believed lies and violence to be intimately joined, and that the self-perpetuating form they took within Soviet totalitarianism made the regime impervious to internal transformation. Indeed, this dedication to the thesis of Soviet totalitarianism was one of the defining features of neoconservative discourse during the Cold War. The USSR was not, argued Podhoretz, 'a nation-state like any other' but 'a radically different idea about how to organise social, political, and economic life on this earth', an idea inimical to Western public and political life (in Drolet 2011: 44–5). This belief led them to condemn any action which could be seen as legitimising the 'Soviet threat' as both strategically and morally erroneous. The USSR was a political entity unlike any other: monolithic, immune to internal change and devoted to an aggressively expansionist project against which any compromise was weakness. It was thus that the idea of the Soviet Union became a self-consolidating other to neoconservative ideology, a Soviet Union which existed apart from and even against the actual geopolitical power of that name.

Shifting Strategies of Self-Consolidation

The neoconservatives held onto the thesis of irreversibility long after it had ceased to be fashionable, or indeed functional (Goldfarb 1991: 15). This is especially visible in their attitudes toward *glasnost*, the move towards informational transparency within the USSR under Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-late 1980s. Following Kirkpatrick's thesis regarding 'the lie', Podhoretz and other neoconservative writers in *Commentary* painted Gorbachev as a 'cunning Leninist' who had 'seduced America' into 'lowering its guard' (Dorrien 2004: 12): *glasnost* was not freedom of information, but a technique to implant propaganda into Western minds by making the USSR appear more open, and so further corrupt those officials and diplomats who persisted in the belief that the Soviet Union was just a state like any-other. Since it was incapable of change, it could not be changing: there had to be another, more sinister reason. As Nathan Abrams astutely observes, '*Commentary* perceived Soviet reforms not as a sign that it was changing, but rather that it was becoming more invincible' (2010: 223). Perhaps naturally, as a result of their myopic focus on Soviet totalitarianism none of the neoconservatives foresaw its collapse because that collapse came from within. To them, the dissolution of the Soviet bloc in the autumn of 1989 was 'exhilarating, confounding, and deflating all at once' (Dorrien 2004: 13). In a last effort to circumvent the embarrassing revelation that the USSR had fallen from internal pressures, Podhoretz exalted Reagan and Margaret Thatcher as 'apostles of victory' over Communism, heralding them as a return to the spirit and traditions of 'genuine [pre-Great Society] liberalism' and laying the honours for Soviet defeat at the feet of Reagan's 'visionary leadership', and was still claiming such as late as 1999 (Abrams 2010: 248-9).

In contrast to Podhoretz, neoconservatives like Kristol and Kirkpatrick called for a return to a more pragmatic realism (Dorrien 2004: 69). In 1989, Francis Fukuyama published his essay 'The End of History?' in Kristol's new journal, *The National Interest* (1985–2002), which announced the end of the era of ideology and the triumph of liberal-capitalist democracy as the state-system vindicated by history (Abrams 2010: 256). Indeed, many neoconservatives felt that history had legitimised their views, a perspective made clear not simply in their triumphalism but in the

obituaries written during the 1990s by some of the movement's key members. Podhoretz wrote that neoconservatism 'no longer exist[ed]' as a distinct phenomenon needing its own name, Kristol argued that it 'was a generational phenomena' which had now become wholly integrated into a 'more comprehensive conservatism', while Seymour Lipsett remarked that the word had 'lost its meaning' (in Vaïsse 2010: 220). The era of ideology was over. Yet these notes of victory hint at the degree to which Communism had been the neoconservatives' self-consolidating other. The movement had been defined through its opposition to an enemy that no longer existed, and had thus lost its driving impetus (and necessitated mutations, explored below). Yet while neoconservatism may have been one of the last movements that relied on a purely ideological reading of the USSR, it was far from the only one to draw—explicitly or implicitly—upon that mutually-consolidating self-other binary. David Campbell, in *Writing Security*, examines how American foreign policy towards the USSR was part of a politics of identity, and that the crisis in the international system which emerged in the Cold War's wake was very much a crisis of representation. He writes (1992: 195):

In the West, the cold war was an ensemble of practices in which an interpretation of danger crystallised around objectifications of communism and the Soviet Union. In replicating both the structural and narrative qualities of earlier articulations of danger (vis-à-vis other 'others'), enmity towards communism and the Soviet Union functioned as a code for the inscription of the multiple boundaries between the 'civilized' and the 'barbaric,' the 'normal' and the 'pathological.' In consequence...the figuration of difference as otherness in the cold war rendered a contingent identity ('the West,' 'America,' et al.) secure. Containment was thus more than a historically specific Foreign Policy strategy...[it was] a strategy associated with a logic of identity whereby the ethical powers of segregation that make up foreign policy constitute the identity of the agent in whose name they operate, and give rise to a geography of evil.

The creation of geographies of evil should be a piece of international rhetoric familiar to us since the start of the War on Terror; it is a logic which pervaded much of the post-Cold War period within the discourse of 'rogue' or 'pariah' states as quasi-states antithetical to international order. Its paradigmatic employment during the Cold War was Reagan's 'evil empire' speech of March 8th 1983, at a time when his government was still influenced by neoconservatives like Kirkpatrick.

The utilisation of ‘evil’ as a conceptual category in foreign relations points to the mechanisms of a political demonology. We can see the logic of this perspective at work in the neoconservative attitudes to the Soviet Union, that it was not ‘a state like any other’ but a demonological structure founded on a self-perpetuating ‘lie’—a new form of socio-political organisation inimical to Western order—and that *glasnost* and *perestroika* were just an illusion of reform designed to open the West up to attack. As the Soviet Union collapsed we see to what extent this demonological otherness was a construct of neoconservative discourse itself. The Soviet Union was the demonic other to (neoconservative) American sovereignty. Neoconservatism used the policies and actions of the USSR to legitimise their ideological stance. When Reagan moved toward rapprochement with Gorbachev in the late 1980s, this ideology was reinforced rather than undermined: the Soviets had succeeded in duping the West, any internal discourse of reform was deception—change could only come from without, by means of containment and opposition. The demon would not exorcise itself. Until it did.

With the removal of their demonological other in 1989, the neoconservatives were forced to search elsewhere. The holy hunt had to continue. Later sections of this chapter investigate this reformulation of demonic alterities after ‘history’s unipolar moment’, particularly in the culture wars of the 1990s and the restructuring of foreign policy. This quest for new demons to kill, however, is deeply tied to the religious impulse in neoconservative ideology. Understanding this impulse is crucial not simply for understanding the evangelical influence on the 2000–2008 Bush presidency and the concurrent Global War on Terror, but also for appreciating the more subtle ways the rhetoric and mentalities of the Cold War and post-Cold-War periods were inflected by specific religious paradigms. These ideological paradigms taken together construct a particular model of civil religion that codes an image of the authentic American that survives to the present.

CAPITALIST, CHRISTIAN, AMERICAN

As noted earlier, religion—or at least religious morality—constituted a dominant part of neoconservative thought. Neoconservatives are sometimes identified as wanting to

undermine church-state separation, but this is not wholly accurate. Neoconservatives tended to view America as on the road to a moral bankruptcy characterised by a ‘culture of appeasement’ consumed by liberal guilt, anti-patriotic sentiment, feminism and gay rights.⁴ The religion they sought (and seek) to integrate into the state apparatus was more aligned with ethical paradigms than theological ones: belief came second to praxis. As noted above, neoconservatism deploys ‘Judeo-Christian’ morals to rejuvenate fallen society (Nadesan 2008: 141). This theo-moralistic tendency can be seen in the strategic alliances Podhoretz tried to create with Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority, and other religious right organisations in the post-Cold-War ‘culture wars’, as well as a variety of other theopolitical constellations. These ‘culture wars’ marked a period of internalisation for neoconservative criticism. With its primary external foil gone it searched for a new other, and in doing so began to return to the domestically-oriented, anti-New-Left focus of its origins. It also showed a shift in neoconservatism toward a more mainstream conservatism, occasioning the epitaphs and obituaries described above. The same might be said of the evangelical right. The religious right had long been associated with the paleoconservatives of the Old Right as one of its core demographics, but—much as the neoconservatives did—right-wing evangelists rose to politico-cultural prominence during the Cold War. This cultural shift crafted the core mechanisms of the evangelical-capitalist assemblage.

Constructing (A Need for) Normality

The term ‘culture wars’ is a calque from the German *Kulturkampf*, referring originally to the 1871–78 campaign by Otto von Bismarck against the influence of the Catholic Church within the German Empire. It is often used in English to refer to similar conflicts over morality and values within a society. The term in its English form was used to refer to the religious right’s campaign against what they perceived as the subversive, indecent and blasphemous works of liberal artists and academics during the Reagan Presidency. The term was then reintroduced in the early 1990s with James

⁴ Podhoretz once wrote in a piece about the antiwar movement that ‘homosexuals’ opposed war out of a ‘lust’ for ‘helpless, good-looking boys’ (in Dorrien 2004: 11). *Commentary* under Podhoretz’s editorship became a bastion of criticism against feminism and gay rights, featuring numerous articles riling against same-sex couples and holding that AIDS was a ‘gay’ disease caused by ‘anal sex and needle sharing’ (Abrams 2010: 213).

Davison Hunter's *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (1991), in which he argues that American society had drawn itself up along two opposing ideological fronts, characterised primarily by attitudes to abortion, homosexuality, recreational drug use, gun politics, privacy, censorship, and church-state separation. The reignition of the culture wars in the 1990s is strongly associated with the Republican politician and political commentator Pat Buchanan, who argued that America was embroiled in a religious war over its very soul. In 1992, in opposition to Bill and Hilary Clinton, he argued against 'abortion on demand, a litmus test for the Supreme Court, homosexual rights, discrimination against religious schools, [and] women in combat', stating that such change was 'not the kind of change America wants...not the kind of change America needs. And...not the kind of change we can tolerate in a nation that we still call God's country' (1992: n.p.).

Podhoretz was one of the first neoconservatives to enter the culture wars. Alongside Midge Decter and other neoconservatives, he composed various articles in *Commentary* attacking political correctness and the liberal domination of academia driven by a 'nihilist onslaught of deconstruction.' Attempting to recall the Manichean simplicity of the Cold War, writers in *Commentary* proclaimed that the last bastion of Marxism was the university, and there—in a place 'contaminated with foreign and "totalitarian modes of thinking," antithetical to the Western tradition'—free speech had died (Abrams 2010: 258). Appalled by environmentalism, sexual liberation, anti-capitalism and multiculturalism, Podhoretz and his allied neoconservatives believed political correctness to be resurrecting the atrocities of the Great Society programs they had combated in the 1960s. Leon Kass framed the debate as a battle between 'Sodom and Gomorrah and Middletown,' between 'the values of the Bible and the values of the mass media,' which posed the greatest challenge to American unity since the Civil War (in *ibid.*: 263). In 1993, following the election of Bill Clinton, Irving Kristol wrote in *The National Interest* that:

There is no 'after the Cold War' for me. So far from having ended, my Cold War has increased in intensity, as sector after sector has been ruthlessly corrupted by the liberal ethos. Now that the other Cold War is over, the real Cold War has begun. We are far less prepared for this Cold War, far more vulnerable to the enemy, than was the case with our victorious war against a global Communist threat (in Friedman 2005: 185).

Other neoconservatives such as James Q. Wilson, Gertrude Himmelfarb and Allan Bloom joined the waging of this ‘real Cold War’, unleashing vitriolic critiques of the university, New Age spirituality and the moral degeneration of society (Friedman 2005: 199).

As noted earlier, in their views of the domestic sphere neoconservatives and evangelicals were closer to one another than to mainline conservatives (Friedman 2005: 208). Neoconservative opposition to the welfare state often utilised language which discussed a degradation of the souls of recipients, and, as discussed by Lahr (2007), the capitalist work ethic had been increasingly integrated into an ‘American identity’ during the Cold War as part of a counter-image constructed to ward against its godless, communist foe. To an extent, neoconservatives and the evangelical right were speaking the same tongue. They worked from partly-shared grounding principles toward the moral-spiritual regeneration of America conceived through a rejection of emancipatory politics, the distribution of wealth, and the liberalised academy. This discourse bears witness to the fragmentation *and* intensification of the discourse of an authentic American citizen through its differentiation from its others. In the Cold War this other had manifested mainly as the communist infiltrator of McCarthyism. It was an external other, albeit one who could trespass on the ground of the self. However, as Kristol’s words clarify, the new foe was even more nebulous and devastating. It had gained control over the education system and other cultural institutions. Whereas the battle before had been to safeguard America from an external foe, this new mission was to save the nation from itself.

Constructions of heteronormativity, gender, and race played a central role in the post-Cold War (re)construction of an Unamerican American, ones that resurface violently in both the discourse of rogue states and the Global War on Terror. Nathan Abrams discusses these issues in depth in his critique of Podhoretz and *Commentary* Magazine (2010), as does Murray Friedman, albeit in a manner more sympathetic to the neoconservative perspective (2005). Projects like Affirmative Action aimed at balancing racial equality enraged neoconservatives, who believed that such policies undermined the meritocratic ideal of American society and were unconstitutional. This had been an enduring topic of neoconservative criticism since 1975, when Nathan Glazer published *Affirmative Discrimination*. Podhoretz’s editorship of

Commentary also saw a decline in African-American contributors compared to its previous history under Elliot Cohen, and while it presented a veneer of support for the Civil Rights movement, Abrams observes that the majority of essays published were from white political scientists, historians, sociologists and psychologists, with scant attention given to voices within the African-American community itself (2010: 61–2). Indeed, Podhoretz himself was demonstrably anti-integration, writing that white feelings for black Americans were ‘twisted and sick’ and that their ‘abstract support’ for Civil Rights would ‘not stand the test of a direct confrontation’ (in *ibid.*: 64). Later, under the Reagan administration, neoconservatives like Kristol, Podhoretz, Glazer, Elliot Abrams and Carl Gershman provided the ideological basis for a ‘civil-rights retreat’ by adopting a blame-the-victim mentality regarding African-American poverty, and frequently drew on images of black anti-Semitism in order to push the Jewish community away from civil rights support, despite these views being marginal (*ibid.*: 190). The former attitude has been aptly classified by Nathan Abrams as ‘social Darwinist laissez-faire racism’ (*ibid.*: 261). Further, in 1994 neoconservatives Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein published *The Bell Curve*, which linked intelligence, genetics and race in order to argue that Hispanics and blacks naturally had lower IQs and therefore achieved less than whites. While widely disdained, *Commentary* not only gave the work a favourable (if not uncritical) review but even provided Murray with space to defend his views, a move which Michael Lind remarks as granting the text a veneer of credibility, presenting ‘opponents of pseudo-scientific racism [as] nothing more than liberals frightened of daring scholarship’ (1996: 207).

Commentary also adopted a strong stance against feminism, declaring it a ‘coercive movement towards androgyny’, terminology revealing a threatened masculinity, and portrayed feminists as ‘egomaniacal anarchists’ undermining the family (Abrams 2010: 104–5). This is similar logic to that used against the gay rights movement, which was also accused of undermining the legitimacy of the family. Podhoretz wrote:

My position on gay rights has to do with my fear of the rise and spread of tendencies in this society and in this culture which undermine in a very drastic way the possibility of maintaining the family as the key institution of our society, and of raising our children and our grandchildren in a context which makes it possible for them to live and take their place in the natural chain of the generations (in Dershowitz 1991: 202–3).

In Podhoretz's words we can perceive the crystallisation of certain features key to the neoconservative critique shared with the evangelical right: a focus on the traditional nuclear family as the purveyor of authentic culture (undermined by feminist 'androgyny', LGBT rights, abortion and other practices), and a mentality by which American neoliberal capitalism is seen as conveying the tools for self-determination and success. For neoconservatives like Podhoretz, the authentic American is a member of a heteronormative family instilled with the traditional values of capitalist success, conservative morality, and extreme patriotism; the 'liberal ethos' which 'ruthlessly corrupted' 'sector after sector' (Kristol) in the wake of the Cold War was a direct challenge to this authenticity. The systems erected by liberationist movements embodied in the tainted university sector pushed socialist and anti-patriotic agendas responsible for separating Americans from what they should be, from a pure 'idea of the American.' The construction of this 'idea' of the American is closely tied up with the contested history of civil religion, as well as a more explicit history of the American prophetic history. As discussed above, scholars like Marty and Wuthnow posited competing forms of civil religion. Rather than being oppositional, however, it is better to see these as sides of the selfsame discourse that critiques America as it is while appealing to a celebratory notion of what it *ought* to be.

Dispensation(s)

America has a long and intricate history of engagement with prophetic ideas and traditions, especially apocalyptic ones. Some of the earliest European colonists saw it as a place to build New Jerusalem, a belief that persisted throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A form of 'civic millennialism' was prevalent in antebellum America, embodied first in groups like the Millerites and later in individuals like Timothy Dwight and Samuel Davies Baldwin (Boyer 1992: 80–112). Dwight, whom I discussed in Chapter One regarding his crucial role in the Illuminati-panic of the late eighteenth-century, proclaimed in his 1776 Valedictory Address at Yale University that history would end with America: 'the Empire of North-America [would] be the last on Earth' and it would also be the 'most glorious' (in Stein 1984: 290). This specific millennial sentiment is encoded in forms of American civil religion. However, while the 'evangelical-capitalist resonance machine' I am analysing has

roots in civil religion, it is a machine born in the specificity of the Cold War. In this section, while I will reference some earlier traditions—such as the dispensationalism of John Nelson Darby (1800–1882) and doctrines like the Rapture—my focus here will be on right-wing evangelicalism during and after the Cold War.

As Paul Boyer makes clear, the term ‘evangelicalism’ refer to a specific subset of American Protestant Christianity, and is sometimes known as ‘fundamentalism’ (1992: 3). Much like neoconservatism, this subset of American Protestantism rose to prominence during the 1970s in response to liberal social policies, Cold War political binarisation, and the new perils of the atomic age. Unlike neoconservatives, however, evangelicals adapted these external events to their preexisting religious frameworks, ones that were often apocalyptic in outlook and rooted in the dispensational model of history popularised by Darby in the mid-nineteenth century (Boyer 1992; Lahr 2007; Wojcik 1997). Associated with a large number of evangelical figures, including Hal Lindsey, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Kenneth Copeland, Tim and Beverly LaHaye, and Jack van Impe, among others, Wojcik defines its common traits as ‘biblical literalism and inerrancy, supernaturalism, support for conservative political causes, and [a] condemnation of communism, secularism, science, and ecumenism’ (1997: 34). While these are accurate descriptors, what truly defines dispensationalist doctrine is its model of history.

The term *dispensatio* has a long theological genealogy. As Sherwood (2008) outlines, it refers both to ‘a system of management (law and order) *and* the exception’, and ‘describes a system of management, regulation, and economy’ that is dispensed from the divine, for example the dispensation of law and the dispensation of mercy that supersedes it with the advent of Christ. Sherwood relates the latter event to the sovereign exception, noting that it means that ‘the supersession of the letter of the law [is] (paradoxically) the most perfect fulfilment’ of it, and gestures to the relation of the exception to the system of order in that ‘*only the one who makes the law can dispense with the law*’ (*ibid.*: 320). Ideas of dispensation are thus intimately tied to concepts of sovereignty, and of God as sovereign arbiter of history. For Darby, however, the passage between dispensations could be predicted and plotted by means of biblical prophecy, and, in his vision, were bookended by specific historic events: the next dispensation would begin with the Rapture, after which secular time rapidly

winds down to its foregone conclusion. Darby, however, evaded the rigid dating that had confounded the Millerites, among others, and by placing history in the hands of the sovereign dispenser, his dispensationalism pushed back against liberal English and American interpretations of scripture that challenged its divine inspiration, and found fertile soil in the *laissez-faire* ideologies that abounded in nineteenth-century America (Boyer 1992: 86–90; Wójcik 1997: 21–36).

Darby's teachings became particularly influential in North America through the Bible Conference movement, begun by 'conservative, soul-saving evangelical Protestants' in 1875 to create a forum for doctrinal orthodoxy (Utzinger 2006: 118). While the content of his model is less relevant than the form it took in the writings of the individuals and movements considered shortly, one aspect that does bear mention is his notion of the Church as predicated on a concept of divine unity set against the evil of the world. Darby wrote that: 'Evil exists. The world is lying in wickedness, and the God of unity is the Holy God. Separation, therefore, from evil, becomes the necessary and sole basis and principle...of unity; for He can have no union with evil' (in Utzinger 2006: 117). The Church was meant to replicate this unity, 'in one place [representing] the whole and [acting] in its name' (in *ibid.*). As Michael Utzinger notes, while Darby's position might seem 'theologically cogent', in reality it led to further division, with his own Plymouth Brethren becoming fractured in his lifetime over 'who would be welcomed at the communion table, the very symbol of Christian community' (2006: 117–118). This specific element presages a trend in dispensational millennialism to divide through the ideological promotion of unity, dividing people between an authentic community and an exterior world coded as fundamentally evil. This theme recurs throughout the proceeding case studies in varying ways, and recalls the relation between sovereignty and its demonic other: the inextricable link between sovereign indivisibility and that which conditions its internal and external limits, thus dividing it.

Dispensational prophecy continued to circulate through the nineteenth century but exploded from the beginning of World War I, with many elderly propheticians updating their aging works in line with new events, not only surrounding the wars but also regarding developments in technology. As nineteenth-century writers had found railways coded in the Bible, twentieth-century writers found air travel and television

(Boyer 1992: 106–7). Following World War II and the onset of the Cold War evangelicalism began to adapt its dispensational model for a new context—the atomic age—which also provoked a return to analyses of Christian apocalyptic beyond the prophetic subculture. Angela Lahr details the gradual fusion of ideational constructs in America in this period, in which Christianity, eschatology (secular and religious), and nationalistic anticommunism became the structures through which ‘evangelicals adapted millenarian thought to a Cold War world’, enabling the subculture to utilise ‘prophetic politics to renegotiate their national identity’ (2007: 4). This renegotiation was a crucial component of the developing resonance machine.

Fission and Fusion

Like the propheticians before them, evangelicals like Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham, and Pat Robertson capitalised on the instability of the Cold War by presenting current events as foretold in scriptures, overlaying a veneer of order and sensibility onto a culture wracked by existential anxiety: atomic bombs were God’s pre-ordained method of destruction, Russia was the Gog of Revelation 20 and would invade Israel during the end-times, and the Antichrist would rise as head of the newly-formed UN (Boyer 1992). The USSR was identified as fulfilling an explicitly religious demonic role in history, rather than the (theo)political one it served for the neoconservatives. A paradigm coalesced wherein a nationalism composed of equal-parts capitalism and Christianity became America’s counter and remedy to ‘godless communism’. As Lahr (2007: 199–200) elaborates:

Anticommunism fit in well with the dispensational timeline. It provided a ‘villainous’ foe and a ‘righteous’ cause. Anticommunists feared a situation so dire it justified an arms race of weapons capable of destroying the earth. This corresponded strikingly to premillennialists’ expectations and matched biblical references of annihilation by fire. The book of Revelation draws a firm line between good and evil. The demonization of the ‘other,’ long familiar to evangelicals, helped them to comprehend the dichotomies established during the Cold War that closely paralleled those of their own belief system.

Evangelicalism found in the Soviet Union the same kind of self-consolidating other as neoconservatism had, and as it found its pre-existing paradigms readily adaptable to a Cold War geopolitical climate, its ideologies proliferated through several bestselling books, the most infamous of which was Hal Lindsey’s 1970 *Late, Great Planet Earth*.

Known as the ‘father of the modern prophecy movement’ (Wojcik 1997: 37), Lindsey merged strategic terminology like popular slang with his readings of biblical prophecy to construct a dramatic and, above all, digestible narrative of ‘World War III’—his term for Armageddon—narrating with palpable excitement the deaths of millions in the forthcoming apocalypse. In a period where secular forecasts of the future were steeped in dread, Lindsey injected the end with vivacity and purpose. Indeed, as Michael Barkun (in Boyer 1992: 128) astutely remarks,

As the exclamation points march forward, it becomes clear that Lindsey finds these prospects enormously attractive. His prose pants on with scarcely a word of sympathy for the hundreds of millions killed or maimed. For him, the tribulation is grand, cosmic theatre, the ultimate Hollywood spectacle.

While his dramatising of the apocalypse was received poorly among many preachers and established theologians, Lindsey’s vision gained enormous currency in the popular market, selling more than any other nonfiction book in the whole of the 1970s, having thirty-six printings by 1981 and an excess of twenty-million copies sold by the mid-1990s (Boyer 2003: 537; O’Leary 2000: 421). Others followed Lindsey, adapting Biblical apocalyptic imagery to then-contemporary technologies and politics while still claiming scriptural inerrancy. A poignant passage by prophetician Maxwell Coder (in Boyer 1992: 134) reinterprets the Hebrew language as one of ‘word-pictures’ in order to translate scriptural imagery into the language of nuclear warfare:

Hebrew is a language of word pictures...The word for ‘arrow’ means a piercing missile, and the word for ‘bow’ means a launching device for such a missile...If we use the word pictures instead of what was meant in ancient times, [Ezek. 39:3] translates, ‘And I will smite thy launcher out of thy left hand, and will cause thy missiles to fall out of thy right hand’...The word pictures can describe modern weapons just as accurately as they described those in use twenty-five hundred years ago.

This specific pattern and practice of interpretation enabled evangelical beliefs to acquire space in popular consciousness by appearing to provide timeless answers to contemporary questions in a manner that fit neatly into pre-existing cultural and geopolitical binarisations.

One of the most prominent organisations to take advantage of this space was the Moral Majority. An aspect of America’s Christian Right, the Moral Majority was a voter mobilisation and lobbying organisation founded in 1979 by Baptist preacher and televangelist Jerry Falwell in response to the liberalisation of American culture

(D.K. Williams 2010a: 160–185; 2010b). Its founding was explicitly tactical: several social conservatives on the New Right hoped to utilise the popular appeal of Falwell and his dispensationalism to energise conservative politics. Daniel Williams notes that the New Right tried to convince Falwell by expanding his fundamentalist protestant network to conservative Catholics and Jews as well as Protestants, he would be able to create a ‘moral majority’ of Americans ‘who would vote for conservative causes if Falwell could reach them with the New Right message’ (2010a: 174). The organisation claimed rapid growth: it reported to have registered four million Republican voters for the 1980 election (Diamond 1998: 67; Liebman 1983: 55) and claimed seven million members by 1983 (Gallaher 2015: 433). Reality may have been less radiant: the four million may have been closer to two million (D.K. Williams 2012: 45), and Carolyn Gallaher has indicated that at its height in the 1980s roughly ‘750,000 people received the copies of the [Moral Majority’s] newspaper’ and ‘its direct-mail solicitations returned an average of only 10,000 contributions’ (2015: 433). Regardless, the organisation gained traction in the political arena, managing to push the Republican Party further to the right on social issues, particularly on abortion and gay and lesbian rights, as well as giving strong evangelical support to Reagan’s election campaign (Miller 2014; D.K. Williams 2010a: 186–211).

Entry into mainstream politics also somewhat tempered the prophetic bent of dispensationalists like Falwell and Robertson. While both maintained the inevitability of nuclear destruction as Lindsey had, they began to clarify and condition their claims in order to adapt to the political arena, often giving more place to human agency. In 1983, for example, Falwell endorsed the idea that the nuclear judgement would only follow *after* the Millennium as a way of God clearing the deck to make way for the New Heaven and New Earth, going further to suggest that Washington had a duty ‘to negotiate for peace with the Soviet Union and other nations’ and that ‘we have a human responsibility to do all we can to seek sensible arms controls’ (in Boyer 1992: 137–8). Robertson’s temperances were similar, oriented around his 1988 bid for the US Presidency. In 1985 he declared openly that he no longer anticipated nuclear war as a forthcoming aspect of God’s plan: ‘God doesn’t want to incinerate the world,’ he claimed: Armageddon ‘is an act of God Almighty that has nothing to do with human abilities’ (in *ibid.*: 138). Boyer has noted that Robertson’s concessions stretch back to

his 1982 book *The Secret Kingdom*, which advocated a dominion theology that urged Christians to assume their God-intended authority, power, and dominion over the Earth (*ibid.*: 139). Both Falwell's and Robertson's shifts brought them more in accordance with postmillennial apocalypticisms than the premillennialism of traditional dispensationalism, revealing a tension that emerges when premillennialists attempted to enact change in a world their beliefs technically do not account for. This tension is one that re-emerges in the case studies of later chapters, as writers in this vein attempt to skirt the line between prophesying an inevitable future and enjoining a call to action on the part of their readers.

The Moral Majority continued to gain in stride until backing Robertson as the 1988 Republican presidential candidate, an endeavour that ended in abject failure. It was officially brought to an end by Falwell in 1989, but by then had already gained a foothold in the political scene and exerted an influence on conservative politics that would endure to the present day (Diamond 1998; Miller 2014; D.K. Williams 2010a). Later lobbying organisations such as Robertson's Christian Coalition and the success of dispensationalist fiction like Tim LaHaye's bestselling *Left Behind* built on the Majority's socio-political capital and the success of Lindsey's bestseller. As the USSR faded as an opponent they oriented their theopolitics towards different domestic and foreign targets. Regarding the former, conservative evangelicals drew on the same theologico-political structures utilised to oppose communism and began to rearticulate them for use against secular America (Lahr 2007: 200). The latter also took advantage of preexisting theopolitical constructs, notably the primacy of Israel in the evangelical worldview. Unlike neoconservatives, for whom the USSR served as a self-consolidating other for America itself, for many evangelicals Russia's primary function had been as the Gog of Revelation 20, who would invade Israel as part of the apocalyptic drama. Israel's precarious position among its Arab neighbours left ample room for other interpretations. As the geopolitics changed, so too did the theopolitics.

OWNING THE FUTURE—A THEOLOGICO-GEOPOLITICS OF IDENTITY

Both neoconservatism and evangelicalism underwent significant ideological shifts in the post-Cold War period. As the American/Russian binary opposition dissolved, both movements were forced to adjust their worldviews in search of new others, leading to strategic alliances around shared ideological poles. The conservatism that emerged from the crucible of the Cold War, however, was one that had been shaped by both neoconservative ideas and the evangelical movement, laying the groundwork for what was to come. One of the key elements of this new conservatism was a disillusionment with America itself, a perceived gulf between reality as it was and how they held it should be. In their narratives of authenticity and their focus on the institutions of the family and education, we can discern an emphasis on notions of temporality within neoconservative Cold-War discourse.

Future Territories

What is at stake in all of these narratives is ‘the future’, an idea that mimics aspects of evangelical discourses for which the future is simultaneously fixed and yet always the province of contestation. Kirkpatrick argued for the strategic backing of (allegedly) reformable authoritarian regimes against the (allegedly) irreversible totalitarianism of the USSR, because she believed that once the latter had triumphed there would be nothing beyond it, no future outside of that system. Similarly, in the culture wars the neoconservatives were fighting over which vision of America should determine the future—the authentic, traditional soul of ‘true’ America or the inauthentic, socialist soullessness of the liberationist counterculture.

Irving Kristol once wrote that in an age ruled by competing ideologies the ‘key question’ is ‘who owns the future?’ (1983: 263). We have seen this key question articulated in both domestic and foreign fields of conflict, each articulating a sovereign claim of ownership over this product and place, this territory, ‘the future’. Constructing the future as a contested territory, however, introduces spatial and temporal dynamisms. The neoconservative narrative builds a concept of an authentic nation, spatially-bound, and the role of that nation in both a historical (temporal)

project and a globalised world. Such a narrative hinges on the creation of models of identity and alterity, of an authentic community and those excluded from it (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 13)—here, communists, feminists, gays and lesbians, the new left, and the poor. Who gets to own the future? What does it mean to own it, to determine what it means in itself—this future? Conversely—since, as Michel de Certeau reminds us, the ‘need for certainty is also the admission of the fear of losing it’ (2000: 113)—what does it mean to lose that (right to) ownership? During the Cold War, competition over the future was between two powers—Capitalism and Communism, the US and USSR—a bipolarity that conditioned both geopolitics and theopolitics. However, even after its apparent victory, the US found its claims to ownership still uncertain, haunted by the possibility of loss. Attempts to secure its place in the future played out in dramatic and far-reaching ways following the end of the Cold War, both discursively and materially. One of the foremost of such attempts can be discerned in the discourse surrounding the 1991 Gulf War.

In 1991, then-neoconservative Charles Krauthammer coined ‘unipolarity’ in his *Foreign Affairs* article ‘The Unipolar Moment’, informing the international system that order would be restored by ‘American strength and will—the strength and will to lead a unipolar world, unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce it’ (in Adib-Moghaddam 2011: 204). Arshin Adib-Moghaddam (2011: 204–206) has made the point that this claim was, in a sense, instantiated in the 1991 Gulf War: by receiving support from the international legitimising body of the UN, the US was able to enter into a legally-justified—and thus ‘just’—war. In being legitimised and argued for not solely from a moral standpoint but a legal one, the resulting (legal-ideological) success of the war can be construed as legitimising the unipolar moment: America made a claim to act on behalf of the international system and that system confirmed the claim. With specific regard to the neoconservatives, he writes elsewhere that:

As liberal analysts were caught in the euphoria of a new era of global peace and prosperity, neo-conservatives warned stridently of new risks and challenges, criticising the decline in US military spending and the neglect of President Reagan’s missile defence system. Hence, by attacking Kuwait, Saddam Hussain unconsciously provided for the opportunity to invent new ‘others’, ‘we’ have to combat: rogue states, Islamic fundamentalists, Arab fanatics, and so on...In strategic terms, the ‘neo-conservative *Weltanschauung*’ assumes that unipolarity had eliminated the

determinations of Cold War balance of power calculations, allowing for the redefinition of world- and Persian Gulf politics along US interests. The end of bipolarity and systemically legitimated penetration of the region by US forces were seen as reason enough to take a rather more offensive posture towards regional challengers (2006: 92–4).

Adib-Moghaddam links the development of this ‘more offensive posture’ directly to a politics of identity, specifically to the ‘increasing prominence of a unilateral identity as the preferred self-perception of the post-Cold War US state’ (*ibid.*: 94). This is not to say that there were not other competing narratives—to present US self-identity as monolithic and undifferentiated would be erroneous—just that this narrative became especially influential (*ibid.*; see also Dorrien 2004: 70; Vaïsse 2010: 222–3).

While Adib-Moghaddam does not do so, I would argue that this narrative of monolithic identity as one aspect of a plural and complicated politics of national identity is part of wider discourses of civil religion. As Reeh observed, civil religion operates as a state’s collective remembrance-obliteration of its own history, a process which defines its national character via those artefacts it chooses to commemorate or efface: ‘The definition of America, what is American and what is not, is created through a contested interpretation of history’ (2009: 90). It is thus only natural that the neoconservative attempts to portray the heart or essence of America could only truly occur against a backdrop of the always-already fragmented nature of that essence. As such, I would situate the advocacy of unilateral action in the post-Cold War era as one facet of a broader theologico-geopolitics of identity.

Zone of Peace (House of War)

Another push for US unilateral action came in 1992 in the form of a leaked draft entitled ‘Defense Planning Guidance for the Fiscal Years 1994–1999’ (DPG), devised under the supervision of a prominent ‘third age’ neoconservative—Paul Wolfowitz, then-Undersecretary of Policy at the US Defense Department, and later-Deputy Defense Secretary under George W. Bush. The DPG put forward the proposal that the US should retain the ‘pre-eminent responsibility for addressing selectively those wrongs’ which could affect the US and its allies, or ‘unsettle international relations’. Moreover, if collective action could not be orchestrated, the US should be ‘postured to act independently’ (in George 1993: 297). The document caused an uproar, which

prompted several revisions that conceded more in terminology than in policy direction: a more multilateral language was used though the ideological direction remained oriented towards asserting dominance. In 1993, Dick Cheney—later Vice-President under George W. Bush—published another version under a modified title ('Defense Strategy for the 1990s: The Regional Defense Strategy'). The document put forward the goal of preventing the rise of any rival power comparable to the Soviet Union through creating and maintaining a 'zone of peace' characterised by neoliberal democracies, thus precluding the rise of dominant regional powers (1993: 2-6).

These documents display ideological precursors that would come to the fore after the 'great divide' of 9/11 (Vaïsse 2010: 225), and whose goals would become formalised in the publications and institutions set up by the neoconservatives during the mid-late 1990s, such as Bill Kristol's *Weekly Standard* and the Project for a New American Century (PNAC). Later during the 2004 Gulf War, Robert Kagan (2004: 3) pointed to the ideological mindset behind this unilateralism while simultaneously placing America and Europe into different conceptual spheres regarding legality and force.

On the all-important question of power—the efficacy of power, the morality of power, the desirability of power—American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power...it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Immanuel Kant's 'perpetual peace.' Meanwhile, the United States remains mired in history, exercising power in an anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable, and where true security and the defense and promotion of a liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might.

This view is embodied in the claims that Paul Kahn has recently made regarding the perception and role of (popular) sovereignty in the American system. Kahn resorts to an oft-times essentialist reading of American historical consciousness, drawing on a narrative of revolution in order to present its (in his view) unique understanding of the 'popular sovereign,' whose sovereignty is perceived as under threat from the system of rules and norms crystallised in international law (2011). Kahn's thesis here reflects the tension between a globalised socio-economic system and the allegedly-continued primacy of nation-state actors built on a model of Westphalian sovereignty. His model of American consciousness is more problematic and essentialist, however he succeeds

in capturing a model of sovereignty figured prominently in the evangelical-capitalist assemblage and its articulations of American Exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny.⁵

The conflict between a diffusion of power and the primacy of sovereign nation-state impacts not solely an American desire for continuing geopolitical dominance but also the enduring dispensationalist theopolitics regarding its predestined role. Despite ideas akin to the neoconservatives of the nation's 'moral drift', the US is often constructed as being of specific import regarding world evangelism (Oldfield 1996: 57): America as the last, best hope for freedom, or in this case, of a Christian morality increasingly aligned with a certain interpretation of that freedom. This evangelical nationalism also relates to broader apocalyptic discourses on the diabolic deviancy of world government as against the sovereignty of individual nations. Prefigured in the satanic Illuminati conspiracies of coming global (dis)order, this was a discourse that came to the fore in opposition to the 1920 formation of the League of Nations, which certain evangelicals had viewed as prefiguring the world empire of Antichrist, an 'apostate deviation from that divine truth which had been given once and for all' (Ruotsila 2008: 188–9).

This trend of figuring the construction of international legal bodies such as the League of Nations and later the EU, NATO, and the UN as preludes to the end times—generally compiled under the title of 'New World Order' conspiracies—continues into the present evangelical worldview (Barkun 2013; Fuller 1994; Runions 2014; Wójcik 1996). While it had long been an element of evangelical-conspiracist subculture, discussion around it blossomed after the Cold War when President George H. W. Bush used the phrase 'new world order' in his speech of September 11, 1990. As Barkun (2003: 45) clarifies,

Fundamentalist millenarians saw President Bush's uttering of the phrase... as a sign that the network of Antichrist forces had advanced so far that they could risk speaking about it publicly. To those already habituated to thinking about the Antichrist not simply in individual terms but as a system that drew in the UN, computers, and the global economy, the public invocation of the New World Order could only mean that the days of the Tribulation were imminent.

This religio-political conspiracism can be construed as another element of the broader evangelical-capitalist assemblage. While it often demonised the US government and

⁵ I return to Kahn's formulation of American popular sovereignty in Chapter Seven.

the elites of American society, the discourse articulated similar ideological anxieties, including a loss of US power. As Mark Fenster relates, believers in coming ‘one-world’ government often construe it in terms of an intended usurping of ‘traditional American sovereignty at the local, state, and national levels’, against which popular sovereignty must be reasserted against an already-corrupted federal system (2008: 54–69). Like the evangelical right and neoconservatives, these conspiracist subcultures construct their anxieties not just around the loss of US sovereignty but a particular US sovereignty, that of authentic America.

One America

It would be simple to analyse the trajectories analysed in this chapter in terms of a twofold desire to continue American supremacy in the geopolitical sphere combined with a theopolitics through which evangelicals might use that geopolitical power for their salvific goals. However, it is not just a question of American potency, but of the potency of one vision of America. This is an ‘American Paradise’, where America is a pristine walled enclosure to which only the worthy have access. The loss of ‘superior sovereignty’ within the global system, projected by both neoconservatives and the evangelical right onto their vision of America at large, provokes their moral panic, their messianic pursuits of ‘war, certainty, religion, [and] sexual regulation’ (Runions 2014: 6). It is not necessarily that America is losing dominance that provokes their ire, but rather that it is an-Other America, rather than *their* America that is ascendant. While evangelicals—and neoconservatives who utilised their language—presented their struggle as the latest iteration in a timeless conflict between the cosmic forces of good and evil (more or less secularised in places, or purely theological and non-secular in others), such discourses we have seen here are in fact distinctly situated and drew (consciously or unconsciously) on the socio-historical and ideological contexts of their formulation. The growing culture of conspiracy is another element of this assemblage, and analysing this subculture as a component of the broader evangelical-capitalist assemblage, rather than a ‘lunatic fringe’, might help explain the ease with which conspiracy beliefs have been increasingly adopted by more mainstream parts of the right (Barkun 2013: 229–31; Warner and Neville-Shepard 2014): they were always-already part of the selfsame theopolitical discourse of threatened authenticity.

The texts I analyse in the proceeding chapters draw on this context and its construction of authenticity, of who possesses and lacks the right to be a citizen of paradise. They add to this broader narrative with their own specificities and condition it through the demonised enemies they choose: (political) Islam, the politics of gender and sexuality, or (techno)science and secular humanism. As the narratives discussed going forward rest at the crossroads of civil religion, the legacy of Cold War identity politics, and Biblical prophecy, these discourses are not (only) syncretic blends of ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ ideologies but rather a part of a quasi-continuous genealogy, which—while always-already fractured, discontinuous, and complicated—exerts its force on the present. From their precarious positions in that present, these discourses ask, in Jobian fashion, the ‘key question’ Irving Kristol declared conditioned the age in which they find themselves.

Who owns the future?

PART II

Present Darkesses

CHAPTER FOUR

The IS and the Ought

Political Islam and the Other Globalisation

In Hell there will be nothing but law.

— Grant Gilmore (2014: 99)

In June 2012, five members of the US Congress sent letters to the inspectors general of five government departments asking them to investigate the possible infiltration of the US government by Islamist radicals, specifically those associated with the Muslim Brotherhood. The accusations targeted Huma Abedin, a senior aide to then-Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, as well as other White House staffers. When asked to supply evidence for their claims, congresswoman Michele Bachmann primarily cited work by Frank Gaffney.¹ Gaffney, founder of conservative think-tank the Center for Security Policy and one of the original signatories for PNAC, had both expressed doubts about President Barack Obama's status as a US citizen and accused parts of the government of submitting to Muslim interests. In 2010, his Center had published *Shariah: The Threat to America (An Exercise in Competitive Analysis—Report of Team 'B' II)*, co-authored by Gaffney and others styling themselves 'Team "B" II'.

In the report, Team 'B' II lays out the claim that Islamic *shari'a*, or religious

¹ The event was widely discussed in the press, often dismissively, and compared to a return to McCarthyism. See: 'Bachmann's Islamist Scare Relaunches McCarthyism', in *USA Today* 25/07/2012 (<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2012-07-25/Bachmann-Huma-Abedin-letters/56492480/1>), 'McCarthyism Redux' in *The New York Times*, 18/07/2012 (www.nytimes.com/2012/07/19/opinions/mccarthyism-redux.html), and 'Michele Bachmann's Baseless Attack On Huma Abedin' in *The Washington Post*, 19/07/2012 (www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/michele-bachmanns-baseless-attack-on-huma-abedin/2012/07/19/gJQAFhkiwW_story.html). The incident has recently been analysed (albeit briefly) by Andrew Burt in *American Hysteria* (2015: 150, 178–179).

law, constitutes an ideological and existential threat to the United States. They declare that the US government, under both the Bush and Obama administrations, had concentrated its military efforts into combating violent extremists rather than on the ‘true’ threat of Islamic religious law itself, which, they argue, compels all Muslims that follow it to work to undermine Western civilisation from within in a ‘civilization jihad’. For Team ‘B’ II, *shari’a* constituted a ‘totalitarian socio-political doctrine’ masquerading as religion, and that followers of *shari’a* seek to impose a new world order: ‘a global totalitarian system cloaked as an Islamic state and called a caliphate’. It is impossible in the minds of these Muslims, they continue, for alternative systems of governance and law to coexist peacefully with ‘the end-state they seek’ (2010: 6).

The report is grandiose in its generalisations, drawing on numerous events and quotations to construct a picture of a global conspiracy of devout Muslims working to undermine America. It conflates Sunnis and Shi’ites, as well as groups and persons with disparate interests and goals, from then-President of Iran Mahmood Ahmadinejad to Sayyid Qutb, al-Qaeda, and the Council on American Islamic Relations, in order to portray a united front. This includes the claim that all Muslims who give religious charity (*zakat*) knowingly finance terrorism—since *shari’a* dictates that those engaged in *jihad* are legitimate recipients of such charity (*ibid.*: 11–22). The study reduces the nuanced and complex history of Muslim and non-Muslim relations to one of strife: ‘In fact,’ it declares, ‘the forces of shariah have been at war with non-Muslims for 1400 years and with the United States of America for 200 years. While the most recent campaign to impose this totalitarian code began in the late 20th Century, it is but the latest in a historical record of offensive warfare that stretches back to the origins of Islam itself’ (*ibid.*: 16).

I will return to this report in greater detail below. It is, however, exemplary of a broader set of texts (openly religious and allegedly secular) that construct narratives around a certain figuration of ‘Islam’. Gaffney and his team proclaim that America is engaged in an ‘existential conflict’ against a foe that has succeeded in hiding its true identity (*ibid.*: 11), one residing in a global network of conspirators bound together by an ideological project antithetical to Western freedom and extending back almost a millennium and a half. Indeed, this conspiracy has even gained access to the White House, able to manipulate American policy in accordance with its goals. For Team

‘B’ II, this conflict is between two ontologically antithetical entities locked in a dualistic conflict from which only one will emerge victorious. Other authors—Joel Richardson, Pamela Geller, Robert Spencer, and others—utilise similar *topoi*. They too conflate a variety of groups, individuals, and institutions in order to construct a demonological ‘Islam’, whose essence is ancient and continuous despite appearances of change, and incommensurable to ‘the West’—an equally chimerical figure with an inner essence envisioned as equally immutable.

This chapter analyses the conflict between these constructed others across four sections. The first explores the structural and genealogical similarities and differences between Islamophobic and antisemitic discourses as reflective of the construction of others to a Christian self.² Sections two and three build on this by exploring two sides of contemporary Islamophobic demonologies. Section two focuses on analysing two interrelated conspiracy theories, that of the Muslim Brotherhood infiltration of the US and that of President Barack Obama’s ‘secret Muslim identity’, both of which figure ‘Muslims’ as enemies seeking possession of the Western/American body politic in order to twist it to nefarious (un-American) purposes. Section three analyses the instrumentalisation of Israel as a symbolic and actual shield against Islam in recent apocalyptic texts, which deploy Islamist antisemitism to construct a narrative of cosmic warfare in which Israel becomes a proxy for authentic Western selfhood. The final section then focuses on the image of the ‘Caliphate’ in the works analysed as a competing model of selfhood to a Western/American identity (both of which are constructed as monolithic, essential, and incommensurable).³ This ‘Caliphate’ is both symbolic and geopolitical, encapsulating the imagined intrinsic unity of the Muslim community and the future reality towards which they are constructed as striving. The

² I follow the convention used by David Norman Smith of writing antisemitism and related terminology sans hyphen. Nasar Meer notes, in defence of this, that ‘no phenomenon such as Semitism has ever existed’, though there is a religious and racial-linguistic genealogy of ‘Semites’ (2013: 395; see also Anidjar 2008; Klug 2014). This is not strictly true; however, historically ‘Semitism’ and ‘antisemitism’ were actually synonymous. As Richard Levy notes, the term ‘Semitism’ was in popular usage by the start of the eighteenth century and, while never value-neutral, by mid-century ‘had come to signify a body of uniformly negative traits supposedly clinging to Jews’ (2005: 24–5). ‘Antisemitism’ thus figures a political stance against the idea of Jews constructed by the concept ‘Semitism’, rather than a negation or opposition to it.

³ As all the texts I examine were produced before the rise of ISIS, none of them address this movement, although the movement conforms broadly to their eschatological hopes and fears regarding a coming Caliphate.

primary 'existential conflict' that emerges is not of order against chaos but of order against different order, not self against other but self against an-other self: an American Self beleaguered by postmodern morality, globalisation, changing social norms and political correctness against an Islamic 'Other Self' constructed as unitary, strong and totalising—an '*is*' that is an inverted mirror of what '*ought*' to be.

CONSPIRACISM, ANTISEMITISM, AND THE CHIMERA OF ISLAM

In *Warrant for Genocide*, Norman Cohn posits that the antisemitic myth of the Jewish world conspiracy represents a modern adaptation of an 'ancient demonological tradition' (1981: 22), a view also adopted by David Norman Smith in his article on antisemitic conspiracy theory, 'The Social Construction of Enemies' (1996: 204–8). Additionally, while not making the connection explicit, Robert Fuller details the linking in American and European apocalypticism of the Jews with either Antichrist specifically or demons generally (1994: 134–64). As Smith (1996: 224) notes,

Jews, or any group, can be stigmatized as 'essentially evil' on racial, religious, or cultural grounds. Hence the fundamental issue is not which kind of 'difference' is assigned to such a group, but whether this difference is regarded as ethical and essential. A group that is not 'essentially' evil would not plot against humanity. Nor would it be necessary to annihilate such a people.

This categorisation of essential evil is one of the ways conspiracy theory fulfils the same social function as traditional apocalypticisms. Barkun defines conspiracy belief as an attempt 'to delineate and explain evil' (2003: 3), often resulting in the creation of a worldview dominated by a struggle between dualistic forces. Like providential histories, conspiracism emphasises a universe governed by design (B.P. Bennett 2007). Yet the guiding hand of the architect is predominantly demonic (Wójcik 1997: 141). The guiding force behind civilisation is both hidden and evil. Moreover, the siting of this satanic hand is predominantly outside of a 'true' community of believers, in a foreign and barbarian other disguised as 'upright' and 'innocent' (O'Leary 1995: 6). In the preceeding chapter, I elaborated on a particular construction of this 'true' community. In this and proceeding chapters, I will concentrate on its others; on those whose exclusion from this community is both constitutive and (therefore)

destabilising of it.

The Twinned Trees of Antisemitism and Islamophobia

Identification of Muslims, like Jews, as demonological agents is not new. Beatus of Liébana (c.730–c.800) was first to identify the Antichrist as Muslim in the figure of Muhammad (Rusconi 2000: 293). Thomas Kidd, charting the representations of Islam in American evangelicalism, noting that ‘Mohametan’ religion was a common target of Antichrist aspersions from the early colonial period through the nineteenth century, featuring alongside Catholicism as a bastion of base luxury and superstition opposed to the enlightened reason of Protestantism (2009: 1–18). The demonisation of Islam is thus not recent, yet the form this demonological Islam takes in the texts discussed below draws on contemporary ideologies and social anxieties that differentiate it from the accusations of Beatus or Puritan settlers. This form draws significantly both from historical alignments of Jews and Muslims as others to Christianity (Anidjar 2010; Goldberg 2006; Meer 2013) and from nineteenth- and twentieth-century ideologies of the ‘Jewish conspiracy’, casting their *topoi* in similar but tellingly distinct ways.

In ‘The Limits of Analogy’, Brian Klug examines the analogy between classic antisemitism and contemporary Islamophobia in considerable depth. He notes the politically charged nature of the claim that Muslims in contemporary Europe have adopted a societal status similar to that held by the Jews historically, listing several factors, including post-war demographic shifts, changes in post-Cold War geopolitics and the enduring Israel-Palestine conflict (Klug 2014: 443–4; see also Anidjar 2010; Goldberg 2006; Meer 2013; Rana 2007). He decides that the analogy holds within limits, delineating core similarities and differences between prejudices. Klug lists three genealogical similarities. Both Judaism and Islam are religions with ‘a troubled relationship to Christianity’ in which they have often occupied the negative side of a binary opposition in Christian polemics: ‘Christianity on the side of the angelic—the loving, the forbearing, the forgiving—and Judaism and Islam occupying the other side: the legalistic, the vengeful, the merciless’ (2014: 452–3). Enlightenment thought later assimilated and secularised this narrative, casting the two again on the negative side of a binary, this time on the side of unreason, myth, and tyranny against Western secular reason, science, and freedom (*ibid.*: 453). Finally, both were orientalised, with

Islam firmly in the East and Judaism as the Eastern interloper and the Jews as ‘the Oriental within’ (*ibid.*: 453–4). This third similarity highlights a key difference between the two traditions: the ‘Oriental’ versus the ‘Oriental within’, the distant other versus the other over here, (un)seen. The latter plays a key role in the Jewish conspiracy, which uses antisemitic tracts like the *Protocols* in order to construct an image of an occult web of Jewish global control (Klug 2014; Linehan 2012; Meer and Noorani 2008). While the Muslim was a threat to the borders of a self, the Jew was already within that self; as visible self-otherness, the Jew destabilised the self’s constructed wholeness. With increased immigration of Muslims into Europe and America in the postcolonial period, a dichotomy between Jew and Muslim as internal and external other no longer functions, however. This is not to say they have become identical, however. Indeed, there remain crucial differences.

One of the central features of the Jewish conspiracy is that the control is often figured as financial. Barkun notes that the European/Christian folk image of the Jew as ‘moneylender and economic manipulator’ fitted into a late-nineteenth-century political fascination with the historical function of money, one that included ‘demonizing bankers, hypothesizing outlandish monetary schemes, and imagining bizarre financial conspiracies’ (2003: 129–30). Associations of Jewishness with capitalism do not have a clear equivalent in Islamophobic discourse. Thomas Linehan (2012: 380), in discussing the relationship between antisemitism and Islamophobia in Britain specifically, has noted that ‘neither is there an equivalent discourse alleging Muslim control and orchestration of international finance, as in the Jewish “hidden hand” myth’ (see also Klug 2014: 454; Meer and Noorani 2008: 209). Matthew Carr has posited that the concept of ‘Eurabia,’ in which a ‘masochistic and suicidal Europe’ submits to Islamic religio-cultural domination, could fill this role by casting Muslims as ‘conspiratorial agents of world domination’ (2011: 14). However, Eurabia and the Jewish conspiracy differ crucially in that while Jewish hiddenness is often central, Eurabia often hinges on its alleged self-evidence—while Muslims might conspire in secret, their dominance is seen as obvious, tied to the construction of religious buildings, increased immigration, and rising birth-rates (Fekete 2012: 34–

5).⁴

Linehan's observations are broadly but not wholly accurate. Alongside overt signs of Islamisation (demographics and architecture) in the Eurabia conspiracy is the myth of the moderate Muslim: the idea, Liz Fekete clarifies, that 'Muslims who do not signal their Muslimness (for example, by wearing religious clothing) are merely *posing* as modern, progressive and westernised. They are, in fact, camouflaged, and this makes them the more dangerous' (2012: 35).⁵ This can be considered a version of a key component of conspiracism that marks a conspiracy as non-falsifiable; that is, that evidence against the conspiracy is itself a product of the conspiracy, intended to mislead the unwary and ensure its success (2003: 7). It also, however, gestures to the demonologico-political notion of counterfeiture. The existence of moderate Muslims here is not evidence of Islam's diversity but of a strategy of deliberate deception built to occlude its essential unity.⁶ The 'moderate Muslim' is a counterfeit Westerner.

As Fekete notes, the idea of 'being in camouflage—changing appearance to blend in' was itself central to the Jewish conspiracy (2012: 35), and similar notions of illicit infiltration are exemplified by Team 'B' II, for whom the Muslim Brotherhood is seen as having covert agents at the highest levels of government. The subjugation of America under Islamic law is here perceived as being effected subtly and secretly,

⁴ The possible influence of oil revenue and intergovernmental organisations like OPEC are rarely mentioned. They emerge sometimes in the more overtly apocalyptic texts, such as Jack Smith's 2011 *Islam: The Cloak of Antichrist*, in which Smith interprets apocalyptic Babylon as Wahhabist Saudi Arabia and the 'wine of her immorality' on which the world becomes drunk (Rev. 18:3) as Middle Eastern oil generally (2011: 218). This is one of few overt references, however—the fixation is mainly on *shari'a* legalism and demographic shifts.

⁵ As Saba Mahmood (2006) has elaborated, not only does Islam itself have a long and multifaceted tradition of interpretation, the construction of the 'moderate Muslim' is, today, itself embedded in Western discourses of secularism and in geopolitical strategies of US dominance that attempt to promote (financially and discursively) an 'Islam' brought in line with Enlightenment hermeneutical discourses of reason built in line with a political vision amenable to American interests—religious organisations working towards liberatory social goals but critical of American policies and/or secularism are deemed 'even more dangerous than the militant or the fundamentalist' (*ibid.*: 334). See also Jansen (2011) and Mas (2006).

⁶ This idea is featured heavily in all of the texts examined in this chapter, albeit in different ways. For Gaffney and associates in Team B II, it is a practical deception born from an ideological mission, and belief in *shari'a* is identified as the 'fault line' along which all Muslims must be truly identified lest they corrupt the body politic from within, thereby leaving room for really-existing moderates (2010: 7). This view is echoed by other authors (Gaubatz and Sperry 2009; Geller and Spencer 2010; McCarthy 2011; Spencer 2008), while overtly apocalyptic writers often differ, constructing deception as innate to Islam itself (Richardson 2009: 151–62). This construction of 'true' Islam is, of course, simplistic and erroneous, effacing histories of complex textual interpretation and cultural differences (Jansen 2011; Mahmood 2006; Mas 2006).

an Islamophobic variant of the ‘hidden hand’ myth that reaches its acme in conspiracies of President Obama as a secret ‘Muslim terrorist’ (Gotanda 2011: 194–5), whose ‘Post-American Presidency’ (Geller and Spencer 2010) threatens to destroy ‘Real America’, forever shattering its uniqueness via the advent of ‘a secularist and socialist dystopia along modern Western European lines’ (Schlafly and Neumayr 2012: 1)—barely one step from a Eurabian nightmare.

In the evolution of this ‘Islamic hidden hand’ myth the dissociation of Islam from finance and capitalism is illuminating. The absence of this conspiratorial connection reveals both differences in the operation of the ‘hidden hand’ myths and attributes of the American selfhood constructed as under threat. As I detailed above, capitalism and Christianity became two pillars of American identity during the Cold War, an ideological identification that carried on through Fukuyama’s ‘end of history’ into its promised New American Century. Moreover, in the clash-of-civilisations narrative that saturates popular Islamophobic rhetoric, capitalism is aligned with the West. Rather than a transnational flow of capital as in the Jewish conspiracy, the Islamic conspiracy relies on a transnational flow of bodies. Its tools are immigration and demographics, ‘political correctness’, and (ultimately) changes to law. Whilst the Jewish conspiracy controls with finance, the Muslim conspiracy controls with culture. It infiltrates and subverts the systems of democracy and freedom seen as defining ‘the West’ until it has total control. For the authors examined below, ‘Islam’ necessitates an answer as totalitarian as the system it allegedly heralds.

The Chimera of ‘Islam’

The ‘Islam’ of the Islamic conspiracies outlined below is, at heart, *chimerical*. It is a demonological fantasy with no direct correlative relationship to reality. Smith (1996) adopts the concept of *chimeria* to refer to the mythic fantasies of Jewry that exist in antisemitic discourses. He derives the term from the historian Gavin Langmuir, who used it in order to differentiate types of prejudice, one derived from lived experience or direct contact (‘routine bias’) and another which constructed the other as demonic, which he termed ‘chimeria.’ Smith disagrees with many of Langmuir’s claims, but finds ideas of chimeria useful in understanding antisemitism. While appearing to draw on real Jews or their role in history—‘Jews unquestionably did seem uncanny to

medieval Christians,’ he notes, ‘and they did play a distinctive role as money-lenders in late medieval Europe. Marx was instrumental in forging the intellectual armamentarium of socialism, and the Rothschilds were central figures in early modern finance’ (1996: 221)—antisemitism was not about such realities but was a projection of a search for ‘aboriginal evil’, the dualistic construction of a demonological other that had to be expunged for the continued safety and sanctity of the self. It was this notion of cosmic evil embodied in the chimerical figure of the ‘Jew’ that truly occupied the mind of the antisemite, not ‘the human reality of actual Jews’ (*ibid.*: 215).

I wish to apply Smith’s use of chimeria to analyse Islamophobic discourses. Smith himself alludes to the potential for “‘fanatical” Islam’ to become chimerical, though at the time of writing he did not believe it had yet occurred: ‘Not until fear of “fanatical Islam” is as delusional as Manichaeism’, he wrote, ‘will it qualify as a form of chimeria; and even then it would remain a minor chimeria until it captured the imaginations of tens of millions of people’ (*ibid.*: 225). Given the global ascent of Islamophobic paradigms since 9/11, I believe it is now possible, perhaps necessary, to recognise fear of ‘fanatical Islam’ as a major chimeria. Even if one were to disagree on assigning the label ‘major’, I believe the texts examined below display the level of delusion Smith considers requisite for indicating that Islamophobia has become chimerical.

Similar to the Jewish conspiracy, many Islamophobic texts discuss the actions, statements and practices of real Muslims. At times these Muslims conform to the authors’ Islamophobic narratives in their violence and bigotry, antisemitic language or blind allegiance to an apparently merciless god. It is important to realise, as Smith does in regards to the ‘Jew’, that the existence of such Muslims does not make the ‘Muslim’ any less chimerical. Klug discusses this point in relation to the ‘Woolwich attack’ of May 2013, in which off-duty British soldier Lee Rigby was murdered by Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebawale (2014: 450). Noting the excessive, fear-mongering tone of much of the media coverage, he suggests that:

These descriptions could almost have been lifted from a manual of negative stereotypes of Islam. Almost every major trope is there: backwardness, callousness, bloodiness, an ethic of revenge, mindless worship of a merciless God and so on. Thus the perpetrators were not only

Muslim, they were also ‘Muslim’: they acted out the script written into the Islamophobic figure of the ‘Muslim’ before the eyes of witnesses. The witnesses did not imagine what they saw. The attack really occurred. Nonetheless the *figure* is not real: it is no less fantastic—in the sense of being an image projected on to Muslims collectively—for having been incarnated on the streets of Woolwich (*ibid.*)

The existence of Muslims who fit the narratives of the authors analysed below, do not prove their narratives any more than the Rothschilds being central figures in early modern finance proves the reality of the Jewish conspiracy. Team ‘B’ II claim that the word ‘shariah’ is understood as threatening even to those who do not know what it means (2010: 16). Richardson builds a narrative of Islam’s intrinsic demonic nature, transforming Muslims into ‘literally transcendental, Luciferian figures of bestiality and danger’ (D.N. Smith 1996: 225). Meanwhile, discourses of President Obama’s covert Muslimness, a keystone in broader narratives of his unbelonging, indicate a situation in which ‘partisan and ideological polarization has extended from policy issues to assessments of objective reality’ (Layman, Green and Kalkan 2014: 537). These scenarios exist either in spite of or irrespective of reality. They are not about Muslims but ‘evil’, about the ‘Muslim’ as demonological sign of evil.

Even if Islamophobic demonologies have not yet gained the cultural currency of antisemitic demonologies and Islamophobia and antisemitism are not identical patterns of prejudice, they possess enough similarities—contemporary and genealogical—to make the analogy illuminating. I do not mean that they are fully identical and thereby erase the specificities of each, but this lack of direct one-to-one correlation does not make analogy useless. In addition to a certain shared history, my point is that both antisemitism and Islamophobia are chimerical—demonologies, not anthropologies; the Muslims in the narratives below are, to appropriate Smith, ‘social representations of people, not people per se.’ While there are socio-cultural and historical reasons why this figure is called ‘Muslim’—Klug’s genealogical similarities, 9/11 or 7/7, the Global War on Terror—this ‘Muslim’ is a demonological fiction, like the Chimera itself it is a ‘fabulous monster’, bits of reality sutured with fantasy (D.N. Smith 1996: 220–1). These dismembered parts are disparate data points evoked to construct the form of a demonological other, a force of satanic barbarism locked in a ceaseless, cosmic war of incommensurable essences with an equally immutable—if paradoxically threatened—selfhood. The existence of this other is not

dependent on the statements, actions or existence of actual Muslims, much as antisemitic conspiracies do not depend on the statements, actions or existence of actual Jews. They depend on the monstrous *figuration* of the ‘Muslim’ as a figure of evil, the inassimilable demonic other to an endangered sovereign self.

THE INASSIMILABLE FOREIGNNESS OF ISLAM

‘Instinctively,’ Gaffney and his co-authors begin one section of *Shariah*, ‘even Americans who are unfamiliar with the term “shariah” understand that it poses a threat’ (Center for Security Policy 2010: 16). The source of this observation is never revealed, but the sentence is illustrative of the tone and position adopted by *Shariah* throughout. The text narrates a war between monolithic and incompatible ideological systems, ‘Islam’ and ‘the West’, an existential struggle few in the West are even aware of (even if they comprehend the threat on an instinctual level). The dominant message of the report is that Islam in general, and *shari’a* specifically, constitutes an immediate, profound and heretofore unrecognised ideological threat to the US, its Constitution, and its people’s freedoms. ‘America is engaged’, the authors declare, ‘in existential conflict with foes that have succeeded brilliantly in concealing their true identity and very dangerous capabilities’ (*ibid.*: 11). The danger America faces is not, the report claims, in the weapons of groups like al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah (though these *are* threats) but rather in the innate ideological incompatibility between the ideals of Western (mostly American, but also European) democracy and Islam. While those living in the West have come (naively) to see Islam as a religion, the report asserts, the truth is that Islam is a totalitarian political system, like Nazism and Communism. The ‘Muslim supremacists, often called Islamists’ who constitute the body of this totalitarian group are attempting—some via terrorism, but others by ‘stealthier means’—to institute a totalitarian regime: ‘a global totalitarian system cloaked as an Islamic state and called a caliphate’ (*ibid.*: 6).

This synopsis addresses the heart of ‘Oriental within’ Islamophobic discourse: the innate incompatibility of ‘Islam’ and ‘the West’, the former’s gradual infiltration of the latter, whose naivety leads to its eventual collapse and assimilation. *Shariah*

epitomises the tendencies and *topoi* of this discourse, reinscribing Islamic sacred space as sites of political sedition, terrorist cells metastasised throughout America's body politic. This reinscription ties into specific forms of racial and religious coding in the contemporary US. Drawing on the racial coding of Asian Americans, critical race theorist Neil Gotanda has analysed the coding of 'Muslims' through division into either 'Muslim terrorists'—a radical other who is permanently foreign, inassimilable, and subject to 'disloyalty, espionage, and sabotage'—or 'good Muslims'—who adhere passively to concepts of American secularism by shedding all cultural and religious markers of otherness and/or opposition (2011: 191, 194). As discussed above, while texts posit the possibility of 'good Muslims', there is a tendency to code all 'good Muslims' as 'Muslim terrorists' in disguise, agents of deception waiting to strike. In 'Obama-as-Muslim' conspiracies, the 44th President operates as an exemplar of this tendency, coded first as a covert Muslim and then as covert 'Muslim terrorist' seeking to destroy America. In Obama conspiracies, his identification as 'Muslim' serves mainly as shorthand for a broader unbelonging: as sociologists Layman, Green and Kalkan have noted, 'in contemporary politics, there may be no more effective way to "de-Americanize" a politician than to suggest that he or she is Muslim' (2014: 534–35). 'Muslim' is used because it is coded as representing the quintessence of the 'UnAmerican'. It is this binary—American/Muslim—that carries through all the texts analysed here.

A Brotherhood of Alterity

The group Team 'B' II identify as guiding the covert Islamification of America, and as the centre of all Islamic terrorism and the majority of Muslim organisations in the West, is the Muslim Brotherhood (2010: 65). Further, the Brotherhood has succeeded, via a campaign of deliberate disinformation that has deceived Western governments and large swathes of the public, in placing agents at all levels of the American and European political processes (*ibid.*: 19–20). They clarify as follows:

Steeped in Islamic doctrine, and already embedded deep inside both the United States and our allies, the Brotherhood has become highly skilled in exploiting the civil liberties and multicultural proclivities of Western societies for the purpose of destroying the latter from within (*ibid.*: 10).

This is the 'stealthier means' alluded to above, and is referred to throughout the report

as either ‘civilization jihad’ or ‘stealth jihad’, a ‘pre-violent’ phase of building the Caliphate. Once Islamists have managed to gain enough secular power for themselves via this infiltration of Western systems of governance and bureaucracy, non-Muslims will be forced to submit to Islam or face execution (*ibid.*: 46).

This construction of the Muslim Brotherhood is vast, appearing to include any individual or organisation that has at some point been associated or shared membership with, grown out of or been ideologically used by the Brotherhood. The report lists almost thirty organisations as being either Muslim Brotherhood fronts or ideological allies, ranging from Hamas and al-Qaeda to the Council of American Islamic Relations and Muslim Students Association (MSA). The MSA, founded 1962–3 at the University of Illinois, has the dubious honour of being ‘the first Muslim Brotherhood entity founded in the United States’, which, while seeming like ‘just another moderate Muslim group working on college campuses’ is underpinned by ‘the same ideology as defines the Muslim Brotherhood and al Qaida’ (*ibid.*: 80, 55–91). In a pattern running through all the texts examined here, in identifying why America and the West generally has been blind to this ‘stealth jihad’, Team ‘B’ II places the root cause in a generalised loss of intrinsic values:

As a nation, we have lost our understanding of America’s founding principles and as a result have become increasingly ill-prepared to defend the superiority of those principles. This puts us at a distinct disadvantage in being able to identify, let alone understand and confront, hostile doctrines—both foreign and domestic—that are in conflict with our own. The result of this combination of confusion and lassitude is that, in the face of shariah’s violent and stealthy jihadist assaults, our peace and prosperity are at risk to the point where the core tenets of our nation—and ultimately its very existence—are in jeopardy (*ibid.*: 119).

Additionally, far from being a new threat, this ‘violent and stealthy’ attack is just the latest phase in a history of essential conflict between ‘Islam’ and ‘the West’:

In fact, the forces of shariah have been at war with non-Muslims for 1400 years and with the United States of America for 200 years. While the most recent campaign to impose this totalitarian code began in the late 20th Century, it is but the latest in a historical record of offensive warfare that stretches back to the origins of Islam itself (*ibid.*: 16).

Team B II thereby attempts to build an image of a timeless conflict between opposing forces. The report builds its image of this war by drawing on quotations from Islamist figures like Maududi, Qutb, al-Banna and the Ayatollah Khomeini, as well as Quranic

and hadith narratives and the writings of classical Muslim scholars such as al-Misni, ibn Taymiyya, ibn Rushd, ibn Khaldun, al-Shaybani, and others. Through choosing excerpts from texts from a range of historic periods and from both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims,⁷ Team B II create the impression of an unbroken continuity of Islamic (or Islamist, these being virtually synonymous here) thought (*ibid.*: 45–51).⁸

The immutable Islam the report opposes is, at heart, chimerical; its relation to really-existing Islam or even Islamisms is secondary to its narrative construction of essential and existential conflict. The idea of Muslim Brotherhood infiltration fits easily into general conspiracist discourses about shadowy networks of conspirators. In keeping with my earlier observation that the 'Islamic conspiracy' operates through the transnational flow of bodies, however, it is enlightening to examine the ways that Team 'B' II attempt to redefine Muslim space. This redefinition has its origin in their initial recategorisation of Islam from religion to totalitarian political system, which moves the faith from a religious practice guaranteed freedom of expression under the US Constitution to a threat to that Constitution and the ways of being the authors associate with it. This recasting of Islam leads to a reinscribing of Muslim sacred space as geopolitical space. In this fashion, Team B II reinterpret areas made sacred to Islam—mosques, religious centres and schools, Muslim-dominated neighbourhoods, and even Muslim homes—as spaces of an alien sovereignty infecting the body politic (2010: 55–6). They become sites not of worship, but of sedition.⁹

⁷ This conflation sits in uneasy collusion with broader tendencies to project sectarian motives (whether Sunni/Shi'a or tribal) onto Iraq and other targets of the War on Terror, at least in the media (Peteet 2008; Visser 2007). Visser notes that while the Bush government was often keen to downplay sectarian divisions, the media discourse surrounding post-2003 Iraq often fixated on sectarianism even when such interpretations contradicted evidence (2007: 87–91). Team 'B' II, however, is often prone to downplay sectarianism in favour of presenting a united Islamism threatening to the West: 'Shi'a' appears just three times in the report, two of which are in the context of historic alliances or doctrinal equivalences with Sunnism (2010: 41, 49).

⁸ The political composition of the West in this trans-historical conflict is never raised; while this is not the focus of the report, its absence in a tale of innate conflict is conspicuous at best. It is worth noting, however, that while the narrative constructed by Team 'B' II is centrally one of a totalitarian Islam against the secular social order of the US rather than Christianity directly, they attempt to draw a direct line between Christianity and the doctrines of the Constitution, devoting a section to explaining how the ideas of mutual toleration found in that Constitution and its enshrined separation between Church and State are rooted in Christian doctrines, exemplified by Jesus' statements that one should 'Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men' (1 Peter 2:13) and 'Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's' (Mark 2:17) (2010: 120).

⁹ The logic underlying this division ties into the constitutive divisions of modernity. Gurinder Bhambra (2007) explores how the discursive paradigm of modernity relies on notions of *rupture* and of *difference* defined as temporal and spatial (and spatial-as-temporal). As Bhambra elaborates, one of the

Sacred Seditions

The subsection of *Shariah* redefining sacred space is brief but central. It opens with the following (Center for Security Policy 2010: 55):

The concept of Sacred Space is a well-developed one in shariah, which centuries of commentary have established as authoritative. Indeed, shariah is an aggressively territorial system that holds all land on earth has been given by Allah to Muslims in perpetuity: Since the world already belongs in its entirety to Muslims—whether currently in reality or prospectively—they are both destined and obligated to dominate it.

The authors proceed to explain that ‘Sacralizing new or reclaimed territory for Islam is an ongoing venture in which migrant and converted Muslim communities in the West are constantly engaged...Such Muslims may first sacralize the spaces within their own homes and mosques while later generations typically move outward to claim an ever expanding share of the public space’ (*ibid.*) This leads to an Islamification of space, spreading from new mosques to apartment buildings and entire city blocks, creating ‘a network of Muslim-controlled space’. Further, in ‘many cases’ these spaces ‘become not only ghettos where crime flourishes among an immigrant population that refuses to assimilate, but actual Sacred Space where shariah is practiced in contravention and supersession of local law’ (*ibid.*: 56). Exactly how effectively segregated communities like these manage to play key roles in the infiltration of secular institutions in the name of the Caliphate is never clarified.

I would stress here that I am not arguing that such ghettoised communities do not exist, nor that sacred space is not in a sense always-already political. Rather, I am analysing how the existence of such spaces are both conjured and configured within the text so that, by its positing of a clear division between religion and politics and reconstructing Islam as the latter it reinscribes sacred space as seditious. This relates to Gotanda’s observation of the ‘Muslim terrorist’ as permanently foreign and thus inassimilable: the Muslim *as* Muslim is, by definition, too alien for America and it is

key concepts to emerge in paradigms of modernity was an idea of the progression of systems of knowledge and understanding from the ‘primitive’ (governed by superstition) via the religious and the metaphysical to the ‘modern’, coded in terms of scientific rationalism and constituting the ‘universal’ foundation of modern politics (*ibid.*: 34–55). Islam, as religious, is coded as morally superseded by the strictures of scientific rationality and modern secularised politics. In a sense, ‘Islam’ here cuts an abject figure that adheres partly but not entirely to the political formulations of modernity, which Team ‘B’ II attempts to reconcile by moving it from the (private, apolitical) sphere of religion to that of politics.

only by shedding all difference that the Muslim becomes assimilable—the only ‘good Muslim’ is a ‘not-Muslim.’ For Team ‘B’ II, the existence of Islamic sacred spaces in America is viewed as evidence of a seditious political ideology operating in the West due to the ignorance or ideological infiltration of the authorities. Islamic sacred space does not have a mainly religious function but is the means of achieving the ‘seditious goal [of] civilisation jihad’ (*ibid.*: 74)—of challenging national sovereignties and the secular rule of law.

Tying back into their primary identification of the roots of this infiltration in a general degeneration of Western values, one way the report attempts to construct its image of the undermining of American sovereignty is by the conduct of non-Muslims within these ‘networks of Muslim space’, such as ‘female journalists who don a headscarf for an interview with a Muslim personage and Western political figures who do the same thing’ (*ibid.*: 56). Other targets are general attitudes of ‘political correctness’ and cosmopolitan multiculturalism, whose moral-relativising tendencies are blamed on philosophies of ‘post-modernism’ which have led to an era of ‘Western identity-decline’ (*ibid.*: 125–7). For Team ‘B’ II, this ‘demonstrates a kind of pre-emptive submission on the part of non-Muslim Westerners’ (*ibid.*: 56; see also Geller and Spencer 2010; Mattera 2010; McCarthy 2011; Spencer 2008). The report itself links this attitude of ‘pre-emptive submission’ to a kind of Islamic reverse-colonisation of the West, both physical and ideological.

In the opening segments of chapter seven, the report lays the blame for this ‘submission’ at Western guilt over the subjugation of the colonial Other. Western tolerance of Islam is, according to the report, the latest manifestation of the ‘age-old encounter’ between ‘the West and the rest’ which birthed the image of the ‘Noble Savage’—defined as a projection of ‘nobility onto the primitive peoples...that cancelled out, or at least compensated for, their obvious savagery.’ The Islamist is a new incarnation of this ‘Noble Savage’, but with a ‘crucial difference’: it is not noble and it is ‘here’: ‘Where the Other of yesteryear used to live vividly imagined, if dimly understood, in the Western imagination, the contemporary Other now lives, quite literally, in the West itself’ (*ibid.*: 126–7). The danger is that this other resides amongst ‘us’ but we have deluded ourselves by projecting nobility onto their ‘obvious savagery.’ As the authors clarify, twentieth-century demographic shifts that have

brought the ‘adherents of shariah’ deep into the non-Muslim world are forms of colonisation, since the ‘demands’ of this group for ‘cultural accommodation’ (glossed as ‘submission’) are in truth ‘the 21st Century echo of the centuries-long subjugation of our European ancestors to Islamic conquest and domination’ (*ibid.*: 127).

Team ‘B’ II’s Islamophobic demonology is representative of a swathe of similar demonologies in America that seek to construct Muslims as vessels of a profound theopolitical otherness, often drawing on racist and colonial tropes (though few use the ideas of the ‘Noble Savage’ or ‘reverse colonisation’ as brazenly). The fallout of events like 9/11 and the 2008 financial meltdown, cannot be understated here. For culturally conservative groups like the Tea Party, Donald Pease notes, the ‘loss of the fantasy of American omnipotence’ was filtered through allegiances to military, economic and cultural American Exceptionalism, leading ‘them to interpret the economic setbacks and cultural change from the standpoint of the loss of Real America’ (2010: 90). Team ‘B’ II identify ‘political correctness’ and ‘moral relativism’ as nursemaids to a projected Islamist takeovers, coding such things as antithetical to American patriotism and Christian faith, degrading America’s rightful place (2010: 125–31; see also Richardson 2009: 160). Such ‘identity-decline’ has left America weak, out of touch with its ‘principles’, and allowed antithetical ideologies like Islam(ism) to proliferate in the margins.

The conspiracy outlined by Team B II builds networks of ‘Muslims’ working in collusion to undermine ‘Real America’. Another correlative discourse, however, is that which surrounds President Obama, coding him as an otherness that threatens to destroy America from the top. Often, this otherness is coded as a covert Muslimness, either confessional or cultural, but sometimes takes the form of a religious designation as Antichrist or by coding him as generally UnAmerican. All code him as profoundly other to an idea of American authenticity that mirrors Team ‘B’ II’s coding of sites of Islamic identity as ones of sedition. Much like ‘Muslims’ in general, Pease has noted that for far-right groups Obama is figured as the source and symbol of an end to ‘Real America’, an internalisation of the discourse of evil externalised in the rhetoric of the Global War on Terror (2010: 95).

Blood, Faith, and Soil

Barack Hussein Obama is a practising Christian. Despite this, due to a combination of factors from his name or race to his Kenyan father and Indonesian childhood, several conspiracy theories regarding an allegedly covert Muslim identity sprung up in the years leading to his presidential election, persisting to this day (Layman, Green and Kalkan 2014; Pease 2010; R. Williams 2013). The idea of Obama-as-secret-Muslim originated in a 2004 press release by one Andy Martin, but only began to circulate widely later (Barkun 2013: 184). According to political theorist Danielle Allen, the idea only proliferated after 2006, when Martin's claims resurfaced in an article by Vietnam-war veteran Ted Sampley shortly before Obama declared his candidacy for the Presidency (in Becker 2012: 163). Sampley's version included the idea that Obama was educated in Wahhabist schools in Indonesia, and that—even if he is, in fact Christian—he is seen as Muslim in the Muslim world due to his Muslim paternity (Dittmer 2010: 74). Jason Dittmer highlights aspects of this discourse, noting that they often hinge on either his genetics or cultural upbringing: 'We are by nature a product of our environment,' one online discussant proclaimed, 'Obama attended a Muslim school in his early childhood, these are the most important years of influence' (in *ibid.*: 90). Even if he does not profess Islam, Obama is Muslim (and therefore UnAmerican) by parentage and/or upbringing; this comprises his essence, on which his professed Americanness rests like a veneer.

Despite its lack of veracity, ideas of Obama's covert Muslim identity managed to gain traction in certain conservative circles. In a town-hall-style meeting in September 2008, one woman told the Republican candidate John McCain that Obama was 'an Arab.'¹⁰ McCain corrected her, to audible boos from the crowd, but this did not prevent the ideas from circulating via books, television and radio broadcasts, and the Internet. Hartmann and Newmark report that before the 2010 midterms between twenty and twenty-five percent of Americans believed Obama to be Muslim (2012). Layman, Green and Kalkan report a lower eighteen percent in August 2010, but note that this was a substantial rise from the twelve percent it had hovered around between

¹⁰ Martin, Jonathan and Parnes, Amie, 'McCain: Obama not an Arab, Crowd Boos' *Politico* 10/10/2008 at <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1008/14479.html> [accessed 25/11/2014].

March and October 2008 (2014: 535). Some journalists noted that raising doubts about Obama's faith was part of a concerted attempt to question his 'Americanness' (Beinart 2010; Brooks 2013: 14–16), corroborating Layman, Green and Kalkan's claim that aspersions of Muslimness are tied to attempts at de-Americanisation (2014: 534–35). This fact is best encapsulated, albeit ironically, in a defence of Obama by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, who explained to those questioning the President's religious affiliation that 'the President is not a Muslim, he is a good man' (in Salama 2011: 4).

Layman, Green and Kalkan's observations cut to the heart of the 'Obama conspiracy': it is less about Obama being Muslim and more about him being 'other'. This broader othering has proliferated through the American political sphere, and only magnified after his election in 2008. Martin Parlett, who volunteered for the 2008 Obama campaign, has noted that rejections of Obama on the basis of race and identity became more manifest and mainstream after his election (2014: xi–xii):

The Tea Party; virulent Birtherism; calls for Obama's college records; suggestions of alternative paternities; Obama's depiction as Stalin or Hitler; calls for the president to return to his 'native' Kenya; accusations of Islamic extremism, domestic terrorism, communism, fascism, anti-colonialism, and European socialism; and talk to death panels and re-education camps became the touchstones of a right-wing conspiracy theory of Obama's non-belonging that pushed him beyond the limits of American normalcy.

Discourses of Obama's otherness inflect works that do not base themselves overtly around any covert sense of identity, but rather try to undermine his legitimacy with alleged cultural or political influence or with racially and religiously-coded language. These code Obama as not just UnAmerican but UnAmerican in a way that serves to weaken America. The preface to Pamela Geller's *The Post-American Presidency*, for example, opines Obama's apparent rejection of American Exceptionalism and global dominance, and contains a reference to him once being photographed in May 2008 carrying Fareed Zakaria's 'American epitaph' *The Post-American World*. She claims that Obama seeks to make Zakaria's 'wishful thinking'—a world in which rapidly industrialising nations like China and India begin competing with America on the global scene—a reality (2010: xix).

The theme of Obama being motivated to bring about the decline of American

power is also a central theme of Dinesh D'Souza's *The Roots of Obama's Rage* (2010), which claims he is motivated by an 'anti-colonial' dream inherited from his father to destroy the nation from within. The title's usage of racially-charged words like 'roots' and 'rage' tie into pre-existing tropes of African-American anger, but also directly references Bernard Lewis' 1990 'The Roots of Muslim Rage', which put forward the post-Cold War idea of the 'clash of civilisations' drawn along Judeo-Christian and Islamic lines (W. Brown 2008: 150). Similar racialised and racist *topoi* are also deployed by David Freddoso in his tellingly-titled *Gangster Government* (2011). As Parlett notes, use of racialised emotions and mentalities such as anger, laziness, and stupidity to undermine Obama is common on the political right (2014: 75–124). At the religious end, apocalyptic language is sometimes used even when the texts themselves do not engage with explicit religious apocalypticism. The title of David Harsanyi's *Obama's Four Horsemen* (2013) evokes the idea that Obama will bring disaster upon America, and Wayne Root's *The Ultimate Obama Survival Guide* codes itself in the language of post-apocalyptic survival manuals, teaching readers to 'Build your wealth. Protect your faith and family' in order to 'survive, thrive, and prosper' during 'Obamageddon' (2013).

Others use Antichristic symbolism without championing ideas of Obama's Antichrist status: Phyllis Schlafly and George Neumayr's *No Higher Power* (2012) and David Limbaugh's *The Great Destroyer* (2012) both use the *topos* of a mortal ruler elevating themselves above God and tradition and so bringing ruin on all. In an early passage of *No Higher Power*, Schlafly and Neumayr evoke both the image of Antichristic global power and spectre of Marx in the image of the federal government (2012: 5):

Like Marx, Obama views traditional religion as a temporary opiate for the poor, confused, and jobless—a drug that will dissipate, he hopes, as the federal government assumes more God-like powers, and his new morality of abortion, subsidized contraception, and gay marriage gains adherents.

Obama is a revolutionary, they allege, but of 1789 Paris not 1776 Philadelphia: not of the 'God-fearing American Revolution of our Founding Fathers' but rather the 'starkly anti-religious tradition of the French Revolution' (*ibid.*: 6). His revolutionary secular worldview has sought to destroy the theological and moral foundations of 'Real America', and created a new world in which 'Truth is the new hate speech'

(Geller and Spencer 2010: 67).

The Racial Contract

It is impossible to ignore the distinctly racial elements of this discourse, both in terms of Obama as African-American and as 'Muslim', two identities that intersect at the site of his unbelonging. Both identities rely on a 'racial contract' that scholars like Charles Mills (1997) and Ghassan Hage (1998) have argued underlies the broader social contract of American biopolitics, a contract which distinguishes between white persons who are fully partners in the social contract and non-white 'sub-persons' who are not but condition white personhood as self-consolidating others. Drawing on this prior scholarship, Donald Pease argues that for groups like the Tea Party, Obama's election is translated as the inversion of this racial contract, creating a reality in which 'America no longer [needs] white Americans to reproduce its structures of power' (2010: 102). Obama's contractual sovereignty overturns a racist orthodoxy in American biopolitics, giving rise to discourses that attempt to return him to his 'proper place'. Birtherism is one such discourse—a conspiracy encompassing the state government of Hawaii, the Honolulu press, the government of Kenya and parts of the US federal government to cover up the fact that Obama was born in Kenya and thus cannot *really* be President (Parlett 2014: 37–74; Pease 2010: 102–5; Waltman and Hass 2011: 109–134). Alongside this racist fantasy of black subordination exists the racialisation of the 'Muslim', discussed above. The racialised categorisation of 'Muslim' into 'good Muslim' and 'Muslim terrorist', encodes Obama as a high-profile variant of the latter, an unassimilable foreignness in the heart of America (Gotanda 2011: 194–5). Although mocked as fringe movements, Gotanda observes that Birtherism and Obama-as-Muslim conspiracies operate as part of broader American discourses about race: 'The campaign [to paint Obama as either foreign, Muslim, or both] is a political exercise using traditional and emergent racial subordinations within American racial practices to undermine the authority of the leading black politician of the United States' (*ibid.*: 195).

The racial aspects are present in discourses of Obama's otherness even when overtly minimised. Evangelical identifications of Obama as Antichrist often overlap with 'Muslim' variants, for example, marking a sense of fear and uncertainty

surrounding his breach of the racial contract. Dittmer (2010: 73) analyses this facet of the wider discourse as it has proliferated on the Internet. He quotes an e-mail ‘forward’ that circulated in 2008 and summarises the discursive intersections:

The anti-Christ will be a man, in his 40s, of MUSLIM descent, who will deceive the nations with persuasive language, and have a MASSIVE Christ-like appeal...the prophecy says that people will flock to him and he will promise false hope and world peace, and when he is in power, will destroy everything. Is it OBAMA?

This message, circulating before Obama even assumed office, emphasises his ‘UnAmerican’ bloodline as Sampley or Birtherism do, but recasts it in a referentially demonic light. Dittmer details the emphasis on both Obama’s race and his connection to Islam in discussions of him as the potential Antichrist, focusing on his upbringing, mixed-race heritage, and name—a discourse founded in ‘a geopolitical imagination that emphasized the fundamental difference between identities’ (*ibid.*: 90). That these attributes are focused on is not coincidental. As I detailed above, a strong millenarian thread runs through discourses about America and American Exceptionalism: the idea of the ‘redeemer nation’ or ‘city on a hill’ whose light illuminates the darkness of the world are intimately tied up with the designation of existential enemies, antichristic figures, institutions and communities constructed as antithetical to America’s sacred mission. Prominent individuals labelled as potential Antichrists were necessarily coded as other—John F. Kennedy due to his Catholicism or Henry Kissinger due to his Jewishness, for example (Dittmer 2010; Fuller 1994). Obama is figured as a double outsider: as a black man manifesting self-sovereignty he represents the inversion of the racial contract and in his cultural (or confessional) ‘Muslimness’ he represents an inassimilable invader of the idea of America itself.

The discourses examined here, both in Team ‘B’ II’s Brotherhood conspiracy and in discourses of Obama’s otherness and inauthenticity, relate the infiltration of the foreign other into the domestic sphere. However, there is another, related discourse which projects the self outward into the geopolitical territory of the other. In far-right Islamophobic discourses, this projection is almost always onto the state of Israel, which Liz Fekete observes, becomes figured as ‘the epicentre of the fight to defend western civilisation’ (2012: 41)—a ‘muscular nation, uncorrupted by European decadence (that is, cultural relativism and hatred of its colonial past)’ and thus ideally

positioned to defend true western values against the ‘Islamic onslaught’ (*ibid.*: 33). The following section examines this theopolitics of projection through a more literal demonology. While Team ‘B’ II’s Brotherhood conspiracy and forms of the Obama conspiracy are often not overtly religious demonologies, they operate on the same theopolitical structures. They call for a ‘painful, difficult awakening from a dream world of sunny universalism and pale indecision into a stark reality of black and white, good and evil, win or lose, do or die’ (Center for Security Policy 2010: 130).

ISRAEL AND THE THEOPOLITICS OF PROJECTION

Since the Cold War, prophecy writers have pushed the idea of a Muslim Antichrist in several forms. In 1993 Philip Goodman released *The Assyrian Connection*, updated in 2003. Drawing on Micah 5:5 and Isaiah 10:5, he argues that the Antichrist will be from the region of Assyria (Syria and/or Iraq), and that the seventh empire of Revelation 17:9–11 was the Ottoman Empire (2003). Shifting the apocalyptic focus to Ottoman Turkey is a tactic of several texts, including Joel Richardson’s works (2009; 2012) and Jack Smith’s 2011 *Islam: The Cloak of Antichrist*. Smith is unique, however, in scrapping the traditional empire model completely and reinterpreting the seven heads of the Beast as different Caliphal epochs (2011: 201–2). Some texts do not specify nation but speak of an ‘Islamic Realm’, such as Mark Davidson’s *Hidden in Plain Sight* (2012: 33), though these often tread the same ground as Goodman without novel insight. Continuing on the path of the Assyrian, Joe VanKoevering’s *Unveiling the Man of Sin* (2007) argues, for reasons never made clear, that the Antichrist is Crown Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan. Another work, Walid Shoebat’s *God’s War on Terror* (Shoebat and Richardson 2008) is co-authored with Richardson and traces the same arguments with only a few notable additions.

Among these, the scenario outlined of Joel Richardson’s theory stands out for its novelty, eschatological syncretism, and half-veiled reflections of contemporary fears. Despite claiming that his argument is based in analysis of the scriptures rather than reading headlines into prophecy, Richardson explicitly frames the value of his work through geopolitics and demographics: ‘Islam is the future’, he declares, citing

not its place in prophecy but its rapid statistical growth in North America and Europe (2009: 3–4). While he cautions not to ‘read our assumptions or modern events into Scripture’ (*ibid.*: 86), regarding interpretations of the Soviet Union as having an apocalyptic role, he ends his introduction thus: ‘What Communism was to the twentieth century, Islam will be for the next hundred years’ (*ibid.*: 11). This curious dissonance, in which Richardson decries reading present events into prophecy while simultaneously doing so, ties into the quest for new enemies in the wake of the Cold War discussed in the previous chapter. Additionally, his eschatological synthesis of Christian and Islamic texts—a method common among Muslim apocalypticists (D. Cook 2005; Filiu 2011) but rare in Christian ones—makes him relatively unique; it mimics how ostensibly secular writers like Team ‘B’ II, Geller, and Spencer deploy Islamist rhetorics to build their tales of civilisational incompatibility.

The Disavowed Centre

Rather than being framed as a metastasis of vile alterity through the ‘Free World’s’ body politic, however, Richardson centres his narrative of Muslim evil in the Middle East, around Jerusalem and the state of Israel. His reason for this relates to his Biblical literalism, presenting the Biblical nations featured in prophecy not as symbolic but as referring to the geographical regions indicated in scripture.¹¹ To this effect, he both limits the Antichrist’s coming empire to a regional rather than global scope, and removes Europe and America almost completely, unusual moves given the propensity in modern apocalypticism to identify either the EU or UN as the Babylon of Revelation 17–18 (2009: 81; 2012: 33; see also Runions 2014; Ruotsila 2008).

Richardson’s removal of Euro-America is not the denial of occidental import that he initially presents it to be, however. Israel arises to replace it, not as the nation-state in its complexities and intricacies but as a cypher onto which the absent West is projected. For Richardson, what is openly at stake is the future of the world but what

¹¹ For example, ‘Babylon’ is not a metaphor for either ancient Rome or symbolic New Roman Empire but refers to the nation in which the historic Babylon is found: Iraq. Other apocalyptic nations are likewise the explicit geographical locations they historically referred to, even if these are nebulous. Richardson is at pains to paint the Biblical nations of Meshech and Tubal as located in modern Turkey, but finds this confounded by the nation’s ostensible secularity and historical abolishment of the caliphate; his solution is to appeal to a future rise of a radical Islamic ruler within the nation who will allow it to fulfil its prophetic purpose (2009: 88).

is truly at stake is the future of the West. This is crucial because Richardson openly rejects supersessionist theologies, where the Church literally replaces Israel as object of God's love and the agent of his will (2015). Instead of supersession, Richardson merges Jews and Christians into a single unity—'the people of God' (2012: 6), which then battles a demonological Islam. In doing so, Richardson rhetorically appropriates Jewish identity and historic suffering into a scenario in which the final choice is only ever between Christianity and Islam (2009: 165). Israel, both modern state and religious nation, are subsumed into a Christian theopolitics. Using Israel as symbolic proxy for the West, however, is not a feature unique to Richardson. As stated above, Fekete observed that neoconservatives, counter-jihadists and other members of the far-right often code Israel as the last bastion of an uncompromised Western spirit, becoming 'the epicentre of the fight to defend western civilisation' (2012: 41). Such coding creates a dynamic in which Western selfhood is projected onto Israel, whose imperviousness against its Muslim foes becomes symbolic of the battle for a 'Real' West already compromised by anti-colonial, postmodern 'identity-decline.'

Of Richardson's texts, *The Islamic Antichrist* (2009) is the more narrative, presenting his core ideas. *Mideast Beast* (2012) is comprised mostly of exegeses of certain Bible verses used to expand and support the claims he makes in *Antichrist*.¹² Both are focused on reading apocalyptic prophecy via a comparison of Christian and Islamic eschatologies. He outlines the books' mission early, writing that *Antichrist* 'is a call for many to realize the degree to which the future of the Christian church—indeed, the future of the entire world—and the future of Islam are divinely and directly interconnected' (2009: 3). He then poses his guiding question: 'How do you suppose that Satan has planned to include the world's 1.5 billion Muslims in his grand end-time deception?' He follows this with two alternatives 'Did Satan fail to foresee and strategize regarding the global spread of Islam [and so make them scripturally irrelevant]? Or has Satan included the Muslims of the world in his end-time strategy?' (2009: 11).

Richardson chooses the latter. Indeed, Islam is 'the primary vehicle that will be used by Satan' to fulfil prophecies 'about the future political/religious/military

¹² *The Islamic Antichrist* is itself a revision of an earlier text, *Antichrist: Islam's Awaited Messiah* (2006), republished by conservative media outlet World Net Daily.

system of the Antichrist that will overwhelm the entire world just prior to the second coming of Jesus' (2009: 12). Contra apocalypticists who hold that Antichrist will arise from doctrines of atheism or secular humanism or misused or unholy technologies (2012: 6; see Chapter Six, below), the Antichrist will arise from radical Islam (figured here, as elsewhere, as Islam *in toto*). He advances this idea with two methods: textual and socio-political. The first occupies most of both works and constructs Christian and Islamic eschatologies as twisted copies of one another, with the Christian account being taken as true and the Islamic being a diabolic inversion. The second, which is both the capstone of, and a telling divergence from the first, constructs a narrative of innate animosity between the Jews as God's people and Muslims as Satan's pawns, usually hinging on contemporary geopolitics and demographics. Individual Muslims are rendered either unwitting pawns or demonic co-conspirators in a cosmic war. The influence on modern Islamist antisemitism of European texts like *The Protocols* and Christianity's own history of antisemitism are mostly effaced and, when the latter is raised it is laid at the feet of 'perverted form' of Christianity (2009: 116).¹³

The bulk of both *Antichrist* and *Beast* comprise Richardson's deliberation of several contextual similarities he pulls out of Christian and Islamic eschatology. Its core tenet is that the figures identified by Islam as the Mahdi (the Islamic messiah) and (the Muslim version of) Jesus are identical to Christianity's Antichrist and False Prophet, respectively. Conversely, the *Dajjal* or Islamic Antichrist is none-other than the Christian Jesus (2009: 33–50, 61–70, 77–80). Richardson supports this via a point-by-point comparison of the eschatological figures. These range from broad comparisons, such as the idea that the Mahdi and the Antichrist are simultaneously powerful military and spiritual rulers who apparently reign from the city of Jerusalem (*ibid.*: 33–9), to smaller details like the notion that both figures allegedly have a peace treaty with the Jews for seven years (*ibid.*: 28), and that Antichrist will 'try to change the set times and the laws' (Dan. 7:25).¹⁴

Richardson's Mahdi-Antichrist connection is not novel (see Davidson 2012;

¹³ For analyses of Muslim antisemitism as complex 'Islamic-Christian blend' (Webman 2010: 686), see Flores 2005, 2006, Hassan 2009, and Webman 2010, 2012.

¹⁴ Richardson holds that other religious traditions with unique calendars lack universalist aspirations, and thus 'only Islam fits the bill of a system that has its own unique calendar, a week based on its own religious history, and a clear system of law that it wishes to impose onto the whole earth'. As such, it becomes 'quite plausible' that the reference in Daniel 'describes a Muslim' (2009: 48).

Shoebat and Richardson 2008; J. Smith 2011), but few others go to his lengths. His comparison between Christianity's False Prophet and the Islamic Jesus is more novel but relies on similar points, such as that in Islam the Mahdi and Jesus work together against the *Dajjal*, while the Antichrist and False Prophet form a similar team against the forces of God, with the False Prophet enforcing the Antichrist's policies in much the same way the Muslim Jesus assists the Mahdi (2009: 62–4). Richardson augments this with the Biblical description of the False Prophet as having 'two horns like a lamb, but [speaking] like a dragon' (Rev. 13:11), transitioning from this first to the idea that the False Prophet will be a dragon-in-sheep's clothing, seemingly meek and mild but hiding a demonic core and then to the idea that he will appear not as *a* lamb but *the* Lamb—Jesus himself: 'For many will come in my name, claiming, "I am the Christ," and will deceive many' (Matt. 24:4–5; Richardson 2009: 68). For Richardson, the idea that the Muslim Jesus is both *Jesus* (the core of Christianity) and *Muslim* (the antithesis of Christianity) is final proof; the fact of two traditions having varying interpretations of a single person appears evidence enough that satanic forces are involved (2012: iv). If this is not enough to stir his audience, Richardson adds the comparison that the 'Jesus who returns in the Muslim tradition makes Osama bin Laden look like a novice' (2009: 69). While this might seem like low-hanging fruit, it sets the stage for Richardson's instrumentalisation of antisemitism *vis-à-vis* the conflict between Israel and Islamist groups like al-Qaeda.

The Instrumentalisation of Antisemitism

While scriptural comparisons occupy the majority of the texts, the crux of *Antichrist's* narrative of cosmic war comes in the form of a 'perpetual enmity' that Richardson constructs between Muslims and Jews. He believes that by combining this with his exegetical regionalism, it is possible to read end-times prophecies as 'pointing to the modern-day hostile nations that share the same general location as their ancient antisemitic counterparts' (2012: 52). Richardson's strategy here is similar to Team 'B' II's, although while they begin the existential conflict with Islam with the birth of Islam, Richardson projects his back even further. For Richardson, Islam is in essential continuity with the gentile nations that warred with Israel in the narratives of the Old Testament, the Moabites, Edomites, and Amalekites that occupied the same land as

their modern-day Muslim counterparts (2012: 19). ‘From the day that God showed his favor to the Jewish people,’ he writes, ‘Satan has raged against them.’ The Devil’s main means in actualising this rage is through ‘great world empires’, a sequence that culminates in the ‘beast kingdom’ of Antichrist (2009: 115–16). This kingdom is, like for Smith and Goodman, a reborn Ottoman Empire (*ibid.*: 96). Linking Kemal Atatürk’s abolition of the Caliphate to the seventh head of the Beast, Richardson writes that the ‘Islamic Caliphate has experienced a temporary or apparent death and will revive as the eighth and final empire...The final satanic kingdom is simply a revived version of the Islamic Caliphate’ (2012: 155). This empire will kill ‘two-thirds’ of Israel, and Richardson lays the blame for the atrocities committed at the feet of an ‘inhuman, demonic hatred’ for the Jews: the history of the Jews alone is ‘proof to the open mind that Satan exists’ and the antisemitism rife in the Middle East proves Islam possesses the core characteristic of this Satanic campaign: ‘an unquenchable anti-Semitic spirit’ (2009: 116–17).

Richardson justifies this claim by reference to hadith and Quranic verses often used today to justify Islamic antisemitism, including Surat 2:65, 5:60, and 7:166—in which the Jews’ transgressions curse them and transform them into apes and swine—as well as the hadith that on the day of judgement Jews will hide behind stones and trees and those stones and trees will call out to the Muslims to come and kill them (2009: 113). These verses are commonly employed in the rhetoric of modern Islamists (Landes 2011: 421–66; Tibi 2008: 26–7) and by presenting this textual evidence and its Islamist deployment, Richardson crafts an image of Islam that, although having an appearance of diversity, difference or division, possesses an unchanging heart that persists through time and strives ceaselessly towards its goals—the building of the (Antichristian) Caliphate. Additionally, through constructing a continuity of essence between Islam and the gentile nations, ‘Islam’—in spirit, if not in letter—is rendered antecedent not only to Islam proper but also to both Judaism and Christianity.

As will be made clear in the proceeding chapters, this temporal hierarchisation is common to apocalyptic politics, which often codes new threats as recurrences of old, already-defeated foes. For Richardson, however, this temporalisation is also tied to American secular order—something made clear in two sections on the Antichrist’s reign regarding religious violence and the privatisation of the religious sphere. In the

first Richardson discusses the execution of those who refuse to worship Antichrist, noting ‘How could someone in today’s world think that God demands the killing of other human beings simply because they believe differently?’ (2009: 121). Later, he discusses mandatory worship of Antichrist in the ‘beast kingdom’, saying that such a thing is shocking because, ‘We in the West with our religious freedom view worship as a voluntary act of reverence and love directed toward the one we deem worthy of such worship’ (*ibid.*: 166). Richardson has established that the ‘beast kingdom’ is a Caliphate reborn, and thus intends these statements to be interpreted in light of both this claim and contemporary Islamist terrorism.

Richardson here reaffirms his opposition between Islam, which is archaic and violent, and Christianity, which is modern and peaceful. Religiously, this manifests in Islam as fulfilment of Satan’s desire for self-worship and a continuance of violent gentile religion, while Christianity inherits the spirit of Judaism as ‘God’s people’. Indeed, while he acknowledges violence perpetuated by Christianity these are situated as historical, in a forgotten history replaced by forgiveness and peaceful evangelism (*ibid.*: 121, 140). He therefore mirrors two of antisemitism and Islamophobia’s core genealogical similarities, which place Christianity alongside ‘the angelic—the loving, the forbearing, the forgiving’ and Judaism and Islam on the other side, ‘the legalistic, the vengeful, the merciless’, as well as the Enlightenment’s promotion of ‘reason over unreason, science over myth, freedom over tyranny’ (Klug 2014: 453). Transferring Judaism onto Christianity’s side does not transform the binary itself, which retains its structure, but does allow Richardson to instrumentalise Jewish suffering as a feature of his cosmic war.

While Islamic eschatology does end in a conversion-or-death choice for non-Muslims this is often mirrored in Christianity. As Melani McAlister notes regarding American evangelicalism, evangelicals ‘generally presumed the mass conversion of large numbers of Jews during the tribulation, and the terrible deaths of many others...[viewing] all those who had not converted to Christianity as both recalcitrant and doomed’ (2005: 175). This view of evangelical support for Israel has been critiqued by, among others, Stephen Spector, who has noted that even if it was the case in the past such views have waned (2009: 176). Spector does suggest, however, that there is a strong idea, especially post-9/11, that radical Islam seeks to conquer the

Jews first and the Christians second (*ibid.*: vii). This mirrors the generalised notion of Israel as the bulwark of the West, pointing to a general ‘instrumentality’ (Strozier 2002: 204) of the Jews in Christian eschatology in which they are treated as abstract pawns of salvation rather than people (Halsell 1987: 39).

This abstraction and instrumentality is something Richardson attempts to mask in his work. He often blends Christians and Jews as ‘the people of God’ (2006: 6), with Muslims as the main tools of satanic domination (2009: 12). Yet, when the stage is set for Armageddon, Judaism vanishes: ‘As Islam grows in the West’, he writes, ‘people will be forced to face [a] decision. Between the only two real choices, which will it be: Christianity or Islam?’ (2009: 165). The idea of Islam and Christianity as the ‘real choices’ peeks out of the cracks in the texts. He never considers prophetic interpretations or beliefs of contemporary Jews, for example, and while he uses Jewish scripture it is always as the Old Testament, as prefiguration of Christianity. Christianity is here the symbolic inheritor of Judaism much as Islam is figured as the inheritor of the Moabites and Edomites. While the Jews have not been ‘replaced’ by Christianity, the resulting scenario is almost more insidious as their identities are appropriated, absorbed, and ultimately weaponised in its service.

While Richardson hinges his vision on ideas of perpetual and essential conflict between Jews and Muslims, his championing of the Jews is merely part of the general instrumentality of Jews in Christian eschatology at large. This instrumentalisation is merged with a general far-right obsession with Israel as bulwark against the Oriental without. The formative role of European antisemitism in the creation of modern Islamist antisemitism is forgotten in favour of a temporalisation that casts Islam as successor to Israel’s ancient enemies and Christianity as its spiritual ally and inheritor. The Jews here are, at heart, as virtual as the Muslims: chimerical others orbiting an Occidental, Protestant self, not as demoniac opponent but as human shield.

THE OTHER(’S) GLOBALISATION: ‘ISLAM’ AS ‘OTHER SELF’

In this chapter I have traced two ways in which Islam is constructed as radical other to ‘Real American’ selfhood, although these are different emphases of the same

discourse, reliant on similar structures of essentialism and alterity. Following the ‘Oriental within’ model adapted from antisemitic conspiracism, Obama and Muslim Brotherhood conspiracies reinterpret ‘Muslimness’ (whether cultural or confessional) as treason, with Muslims and Islamic sacred space cast as seditious cells metastasised through America’s body politic. Muslim communities are figured as a demonological adversary and infiltrator, a non-America-within-America that finds its quintessence in the conspiracies of Obama as an alien presence in the highest office. Meanwhile Richardson and others build an older ‘Oriental without’ model but in new semblance, merging evangelical eschatology and contemporary geopolitics to instrumentalise the Jews and antisemitism in the service of a cosmic war between Judaeo-Christianity as ‘God’s people’ and Islam as their diabolic mirror. Israel’s specificity is appropriated as symbolic proxy of a pure and uncorrupted West that lives vicariously through the nation’s actual conflict with its (Muslim) neighbours.

The Revenge of History

While their narratives differ, both models rest on a dual foundation of on the one hand Islam’s alleged deceptiveness—figured via the difference between moderate and extremist Muslims that code the former as a veneer of the latter—and its apparent religio-political unity on the other—represented by the Caliphate and embodying the abolition of the Euro-American social order. This foundation is refracted through a temporalising logic that codes Islam as a relic characterised by unreason, violence, tyranny, and deception juxtaposed to a West of reason, peace, freedom, and truth. This creates a clear insider/outsider opposition rooted in essentialist and orientalist discursive structures. Drawing on Klug’s analysis of antisemitism and Islamophobia, the figure of ‘Islam’ becomes positioned as both the ‘Orient’ it occupied historically and the ‘Oriental within’ historically embodied in the ‘Jew’ (2014: 453–4). Like the antisemitic ‘Jew’, the demonological Muslim constructed here is chimerical; while the narratives examined often refer to real Muslims, the Islam they depict is a fantastic demonology. This demonology, as this section explores, reveals more about the instabilities of a sovereign self than the reality of its other. For Richardson the insider-outsider dichotomy is embodied in the image of a pure Israel surrounded by an Islamic evil seeking to destroy it. In the Obama and Muslim Brotherhood conspiracies

the demonological Muslim has already infiltrated the self, an infiltration linked to a weakness of self, an erosion of purity through a lack of adherence to core values (Biblical ethics, racial hierarchy, normative gender roles). In the first model the enemy is at the gates, but the self is still pure and strong, a state to be maintained at all costs, while in the second the self has already been compromised and the insurgent other must be identified and contained.

The ideological temporalisation that operates in this self/other-insider/outsider binary is central to the contemporary context in which it is deployed. While rooted in Orientalist discourses of Enlightenment and Western imperial projects, this temporalisation also ties into a rhetorical strategy that became common following 9/11. The rhetoric codes Islam as an outmoded way of being, an atavism with no true place in the horizon of modernity, and was termed by medievalist Bruce Holsinger the ‘9/11 Premodern’ (2007, 2010). For Holsinger, the ‘9/11 Premodern’ refers to a rhetorical strategy adopted both by members of the 2001–2008 Bush government and prominent media to ‘medievalise’ Islamism generally and al-Qaeda specifically. It constructed a temporalised model of legitimisation where America and its allies represented modernity and futurity and Islamist groups represented a resurgent, invalidated premodern culture and ideology, filled with ‘contaminating premodernities’ that threatened from the borders of Europe. This structure reflects the second and third of Klug’s similarities between Islamophobia and antisemitism, which placed Islam and Judaism in binary opposition to the secularising force of the Enlightenment (2014: 453). Even Richardson, reliant on a narrative of prophecy, constructs Islam as prior to Christianity by placing it in continuity with older gentile nations like Moab and Edom (2009: 111–17; 2012: 15–33).

Holsinger argues that ‘9/11 Premodern’ discourses are based around a miscomprehension—one compounded by orientalist ideas of the ‘Muslim sense of history’ where ‘events like the Crusades...are as immediate as yesterday’—in which they have construed the apocalyptic and medievalistic rhetoric of people like Osama bin Laden—‘crusades, locusts, spears, and so on’—as a direct rejection of modernity, ‘an intricate strategic deployment of the medieval past for a will to inhabit that past’ (2010: 108, 114). By this logic a complex terrorist attack involving transnational financial networks, flight school, and knowledge of airport security—all modern—is

reconstructed as an artefact of a bygone age. This contradiction is summed up in a statement issued by Timothy Lynch, Director of the Project for Criminal Justice at the Cato Institute, before the Committee on the Judiciary on 4th December 2001 (Department of Justice 2002: 184–5):

At the outset, let me say that I agree with those who have said that the attacks of September 11th were not just crimes, they were an act of war. Our country has been attacked by a technologically sophisticated band of barbarians who hold a philosophy that exhibits nothing but contempt for human life. This country stands for the exact opposite of what they believe in. And I think that these people attacked America because they see our country as a symbol for respect for individual rights.

Usage of the almost wilfully oxymoronic phrase ‘technologically sophisticated band of barbarians’ constructs an image of time out of joint with itself: a past reaching for a present it does not have the capacity to control, opposed to a West which has already emerged from its self-imposed immaturity. This temporalisation inflects the attitudes of the authors analysed above on a number of levels, one of the foremost of which is that Team ‘B’ II, Richardson, and the others woven throughout this chapter—Geller, Spencer, McCarthy, Gaubatz, Sperry—take the rhetoric of radical Islamist groups like al-Qaeda at face value. When such groups claim to speak for a true, immutable essence of Islam the authors accept it; when Muslim or non-Muslim commentators attempt to refute this they are marked as a deceiver or dupe, respectively.

One might be tempted to situate their logic solely in relation to the non-falsifiability of conspiracy theories *in toto*; the authors already believe Islam to be an evil working for world domination and so accept evidence that justifies this and reject that which does not as an insidious element of that domination (Barkun 2003, 2013). However, doing so ignores religio-political and socio-cultural contexts, historic and contemporary, which drive the authors to adhere to ideas about the objective facticity of Islamist claims about religious authenticity and politico-militaristic capabilities, even when these seem contrary to reality. Such contexts derive both from enduring Orientalist *topoi*—which posit an inherent trend towards autocracy and temporally code the ‘Orient’ as archaic or atavistic—and from the unstable nature of the truth the authors attempt to defend. As this thesis explores, this construction of singular sovereign truth is inextricable from its demonological others. The chimerical ‘Islam’ figured in the discourses analysed above is one such other, constructed as threat

primarily through its figuration as monolithic, totalitarian selfhood, a selfhood which is embodied in the image of a demonological Caliphate.

The Coming Caliphate: Self/Other—Other Self

Demonological Islam is imagined mainly through the image of the Islamic or Islamist State: the Caliphate. The fears of the authors coalesce around it—a unity of political, legal, and spiritual authority that ends the privatisation of religion enshrined in the modern secular state. Within this Caliphate, devotion to tenets of the faith are implied to be slavish, unreasoned; any use of *shari'a* is literalistic with no space given for exegetic interpretation—totalitarian in the truest sense. This Caliphate reflects that espoused by Islamist radicals like al-Qaeda, which in Arshin Adib-Moghaddam's words, 'wages total war against the "West" and "apostate Muslims" in order to create a true and absolute genealogy; a mythical tale dotted with heroic figures and "authenticated" personalities that would deliver Muslims from their "imperfect" existence, from their fallen present' (2006: 252).

The authors' image of the Caliphate derives significantly from the rhetoric of Islamist groups like al-Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood. This Caliphate is, however, a decidedly modern construct, refracted through ideas of the nation-state and (pan-)nationalist ideological paradigms, with its roots in the political theorisations of Abu Aa'la Maududi—who appears in several of the texts as representative of 'true Islam.' Richardson cites him as 'viewed throughout the Islamic world as one of Islam's greatest scholars' and specifically quotes him on Islam's God-given duty to achieve world domination and to 'destroy any government made by man' (2009: 144). Geller and Spencer follow a similar line, stating that 'Islam traditionally allows for no competition' and juxtaposing Maududi's vision of Islam's political project directly to the United States constitution (2010: 42–3). Elsewhere, Spencer juxtaposes Islamist internationalism with the domestically oriented religious politics of the United States' Christian right, using him as a primary source and noting his influence as 'international and lingering' (2008: 41–4). Jack Smith cites him in order to 'look at the definition of the religion, Islam, as defined by one from within its own ranks' (J. Smith: 151). Team 'B' II's citation is more reserved, focused more on his views about women (2010: 33), although his vision of *shari'a*-based Islamist politics fills the

report.¹⁵

Maududi outlined the principles of an Islamic state in a 1948 radio broadcast, listed as *tawhid* (God's Unity), *risalat* (prophethood), and *khilafat* (viceregency). It is worth quoting this broadcast in detail due to the ways in which the outlined principles are key to the demonological 'Islam' presented in the texts examined above.

Tawhid means only God is the Creator, Sustainer and Master of the universe and of all that exists in it, organic and inorganic...This principle of the unity of God totally negates the concept of the legal and political independence of human beings, individually or collectively. No individual, family, class or race can set themselves above God. God alone is the Ruler and His commandments are the Law...Now consider the Khilafat...Man, according to Islam, is the representative of God on earth, His viceregent. That is to say, by virtue of the powers delegated to him by God, he is required to exercise his God-given authority in this world within the limits prescribed by God. A state that is established in accordance with this political theory will in fact be a human caliphate under the sovereignty of God and will do God's will by working within the limits prescribed by Him and in accordance with His instructions and injunctions (in Liebl 2009: 374).

This vision of the Caliphate and of Islamic politics more broadly saturates the texts of Team 'B' II, Richardson, Geller, Smith, and others. As such, their demonological Islam is coded primarily through its projected unity and coherence. Diversity becomes a façade, a deception, overlaying an essential core that binds all Muslims together in a project of global domination.

Ivan Kalmar notes in relation to the orientalist *topos* of the 'oriental despot' that there was a tendency in the Christian West to figure Muslims as 'slaves, soldiers, and terrorists of Allah: fanatical devotees of a remote and terrifying sublime power' (2012: 2). This tendency is mirrored here—the authors' demonological 'Muslims' leave little room for nuance, becoming little more than vessels for the perpetuation of *shari'a*. In an interesting twist, however, Kalmar links the *topos* of the 'oriental despot' to Christian anxieties about God's (in)justice and (lack of) care regarding his creation—that occidental fear of Islam and its allegedly innate despotic nature operated mainly as a way for Western Christianity to externalise the underlying anxieties present in its own theology (*ibid.*: 9–17). Evaluating the merits and pitfalls

¹⁵ For detailed studies of Maududi's legacy in the constitution of modern political Islam and the development of Islamism as a modern political paradigm, see Adib-Moghaddam 2006 and 2011, Hartung 2014, and Özdalga 2009.

of this argument is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, I am inclined to partly agree if not in relation to historical instantiations then regarding the present context. That is, in the current context the examined authors' visions of a totalitarian and unitary Islam serve to reflect anxieties of their own theopolitical systems. Primarily, this involves an ideological projection onto 'Islam' of a totalitarian unity the authors themselves covet: Islam(ism) is not (just) other to an American self but is discursively constructed as an 'other self'.

All the authors analysed cite weaknesses of their own system as enablers for the 'Islamic onslaught'. Team 'B' II write of 'pre-emptive submission' to Islam in the practices of liberal tolerance, a tolerance that prevents the American people and their government from understanding the 'existential threat' that it poses. Richardson repeats this idea, pleading for 'the Church' to recognise Islam's threat. Meanwhile, Geller, Spencer, Schlafly, Neumeyer, and others write of Obama's alleged destruction of American Exceptionalism—his covert Muslim-ness serving as ultimate indicator of his anti-American intent. Political correctness and moral relativism are figured as nursemaids to the coming Caliphate, antithetical to American patriotism and Christian faith and degrading America's rightful place in the world (Center for Security Policy 2010: 125–31; Richardson 2009: 160). Such 'identity-decline' has left America weak and all the texts caution the radical return to the 'core values' of America—either of Christianity or of a secular Constitution figured as Christian-at-heart—in order to not fall prey to the Islamic/Islamist plot. This focus on essential values relates also to the focus on Israel as a 'muscular nation, uncorrupted by European decadence' (Fekete 2012: 33). Israel's position in the midst of an antagonistic Muslim other and the focus on unswerving support for its defence on both the political and religious right codes it as the last bastion of the 'true West.'

The existential conflict that emerges upon interrogation of these multiple texts is that of a 'Christiano-Secular' American ipseity—beleaguered by globalisation, postmodern morality, shifting social norms and the ever-present spectre of political correctness—and an Islamic other self seen as unitary, totalising, omnipresent, strong, and yet oddly obscured from a West that seems unaware or unconcerned with the erosion of its own alleged authenticity. As I noted above, in the wake of 9/11 and the 2008 financial crisis, conservative groups wrestled with 'loss of the fantasy of

American omnipotence’—they interpreted ‘the economic setbacks and cultural change from the standpoint of the loss of Real America’ (Pease 2010: 90). When Kagan and Kristol founded their Project for a New American Century in 1997, outlining a new foreign policy based on ‘military strength and moral clarity’ in the aftermath of the unipolar moment (Ryan 2010: 88), this was likely not the century they envisioned. Instead, America is wracked by the instability of its sovereignty in a transnational world of cultural and economic flow, ‘Real America’ is eroded, and Islam(ism) is reconfigured as a dark mirror to American Exceptionalism, its Caliphate symbolic of a globalisation in which America no longer holds power.

Criticism of the authors based on their portrayal of Islam as monolithic and changeless might in this light be viewed as misguided: the monolithic nature of this ‘Islam’ is necessary because it represents the authors’ own need for theopolitical unity and their fear of alternative systemic possibilities. Their ‘Caliphate’ is a reflection of their desire for a unitary foundation of moral absolutes, a return to a mythic age of stability and righteousness, but in abject form. Their ‘Islam’ represents a unity the authors crave but in a form coded as incommensurably other. They fear it because it both is and is not the object of their desires. To appropriate and transfigure Adib-Moghaddam’s words on al-Qaeda, Team ‘B’ II, Richardson, Geller, Spencer, and the others wage an ideological war against Muslims and against inauthentic members of their communities ‘in order to create a true and absolute genealogy; a mythical tale dotted with heroic figures and “authenticated” personalities that would deliver [Christian Americans] from their “imperfect” existence, from their fallen present’ (2006: 252).

CHAPTER FIVE

‘Where is the Prince?’

The Jezebel Spirit and the Ownership of Absence

[T]he One depends upon the other; maleness as an essential category depends upon a category called not-maleness. The One is limited and circumscribed by that which is named the other. Without the other, the One would not know where it stopped and started. The One is the static presence known by its differentiation from the fluidity, multiplicity, and absence of the other.

— Helene Tallon Russell (2009: 169)

‘Where is the Prince?’ A question which is a ritual, and a name: Jezebel, *‘izebel*. Other etymologies have been proposed for this name, one which has remained always ambiguous: ‘unexalted, unhusbanded, or the brother is prince’, even ‘chaste’ (Pippin 1999: 32). Biblical scholar Mark Smith traces its elements to *’y*, ‘where?’ and *zebul*, ‘prince’, linking it to Phoenician ritual practice that expressed ‘human concern...over Baal’s death, [as] attested [to] in the Ugaritic Baal cycle’ (2002: 67). Gale Yee claims that the name is a dual-parody: *’izēbūl* first becoming *’i-zēbūl* (‘No nobility’), before *zēbūl* is then twisted into *zebel* (‘dung’) (in Thimmes 2009: 79). When the etymology is relevant to their designs, the authors whose texts I analyse below employ several definitions, sometimes at once, though they prefer ‘unhusbanded’—gesturing towards the defiance of patriarchal authority and ‘proper’ sexual cohabitation which they associate her with (Benson 2010: 21; Freed 2008: 68; Sampson 2012: 33; Schott 2013: 1). Yet in the form of the question lies the kernel of an identity that infiltrates their figurations of Jezebel, encapsulating yet exceeding them. ‘Where is the Prince?’ Jezebel asks. Does this name question the presence of her own ‘false’ gods, whose

absence finally condemns her and thus permits the reassertion of ‘legitimate’ (masculine, monotheistic) authority? Or does it refer to her husband Ahab, whose alleged dominance—his symbolic castration, his absence—by his foreign queen paves the way for Jezebel’s reign, and so acts as both a sign of her self-asserted power and the lament of her adversaries for the restoration of an absent phallus? Or perhaps like the archangel Michael, whose name encodes a rhetorical and negative question in rebuke of Satan’s rebellion—*Mi-cha-el*, ‘Who is like God?’ (Keathley III 1997: 209)—her name might encode a performative act of similar—if oppositional—negation, one which attempts to unsettle the theopolitical monologic of divine sovereignty as such. ‘Where is the Prince?’ Jezebel asks, calling into question through her existence those structures of sovereign indivisibility on which the writers rely and which they continually attempt to reinstate.

This Jezebel haunts the theopolitics of identity I examined in Chapter Three, or at least certain figurations of them. Frequently paired with Babylon (Gardner 2004: 271–6; LeClaire 2013: 59–72; Schott 2013: 101), which Erin Runions notes has come to represent the ‘central fears of U.S. liberal democracy’—‘that sexual, moral, ethnic, or political diversity will disrupt national unity or, conversely, that some totalitarian system will curtail freedom and force homogeneous unity’ (2014: 3)—Jezebel works similarly to embody the terrors of that subset of US culture for whom a ‘Judaean-Christian’ morality is necessary for the moral, economic, cultural and militaristic health of the nation-state. Identified as a source of ‘obsessive sensuality, unbridled witchcraft, hatred of male authority and false teachings in the church and society at large’ (Stark 2009: 68), the Jezebel inscribed here exceeds the Biblical character from whom her name derives, the Queen Jezebel of I and II Kings, but still carries her traces through her discursive construction as triply othered—as woman, as foreigner, and as idolater.¹ This triple alterity conditions her figuration, translated from the

¹ The texts I examine below focus on Jezebel’s figurations as woman and idolater rather than as foreigner. However, in an American context Jezebel is also irreducibly racialised: the ‘jezebel’ remains one of the most pervasive negative stereotypes of African-American women that emerged from slavery, perpetuating ‘the perception of African American women as promiscuous and sexually permissive’ (D.L. Brown, White-Johnson and Griffin-Fennell 2013: 526). Writing within a cultural context in which this depiction endures, the texts analysed make conspicuously little mention of race—an exception being LeClaire’s, which draws a direct line from South Florida’s alleged tolerance of syncretic African diasporic traditions like Voudun and Santeria to its apparent sexual libertinism (2013: 164). While concentration on the biblical narrative might excuse this partially, their projection of this

image of a mortal queen onto that of a demonic spirit—a principality, specifically, gesturing again to the site of the absent prince—gifted her name and constructed as a (sometimes *the*) primary metaphysical influence on the modern (Western) world.²

Even writers who concentrate on another demonological other—Islam or secular (Trans)Humanism, for example—devote space to critiquing an apparent decay of Western morality for which the changing attitudes to sexuality, gender roles, and relations between sexes that ‘Jezebel’ represents serve as a main vehicle, vanguard of a demonic campaign to end ‘legitimate’ (divine, masculine, monotheistic) authority. This Jezebel thus sits behind the ‘identity-decline’ lamented by the authors examined in both the preceding and proceeding chapters. The spiritual warfare discourses analysed below therefore form one part of the broader discourse of theopolitical identity whose origins I examined in the Chapter Three, juxtaposing the image of an authentic American self against a number of competing and ideologically incompatible others, domestic and international. Chapter Four focused on ‘Islam’, constructed as attempting to overcome this idealised selfhood once it was weakened. This chapter focuses on the one constructed as weakening that selfhood so that it can be overcome. This ‘one’ is troubled, however, both by actual multiplicity—discourses of gender and sexuality are rarely homogeneous—and, unlike demonological Islam, in the discursive construction of its alterity, which is founded on an image of fluidity and multiplicity. While the authors attempt to reify this threat into specific symbolic characters—Jezebel and Babylon, already two—these figures are characterised in the texts by an inherent multiplicity that is central to their construction as enemies of authentic order.

character into a pervasive Jezebel spirit suggests that the omission of race might indicate that issues of racial diversity are an unconscious or consciously occluded substrate to broader theopolitical anxieties.

² The word rendered ‘principality’ is *archon* (‘ruler’). It thus lacks the immediate relation to territory that the English has. However, the writers use ‘principality’ in all cases rather than the original Greek term or an alternative translation. Within spiritual warfare discourses, a principality is a specific high-ranking type of demon, which is seen as governing over a specific territory. ‘Principality’ thus refers to both the discursive territory and its ruler. The projected existence of principalities stems from Ephesians 6:12: ‘For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.’ This verse is often seen as presenting a call for spiritual warfare in general, joining the spiritual and material worlds in a relationship of mutual cross-contamination; the enemy is not only one of flesh and blood, but occupies a higher reality, and the corruption of flesh and blood is merely an effect; though it holds some shared origin in the psycho-spiritual weakness of the believer, the enemy is not the corporeal individual but the oppressive spiritual force that has co-opted them for its diabolic purposes (Frangipane 2006: 36, 98; LeClaire 2013: 18; Sampson 2010: 32; 2012: 7; Schott 2013: 92).

Jezebel has been a focus of several texts produced in the genre of apocalyptic writing termed ‘spiritual warfare’ in the last two decades (for example: Benson 2010; J. Clark 1998, 2011; Frangipane 1991, 2006; Freed 2008, 2012; Jackson 2002; LeClaire 2013, 2014; Richter 2005; Sampson 2010, 2012; Schott 2013). She has not, however, received much concentrated scholarly attention. Richard Bartholomew alludes to her in a treatment of the celebrity culture of modern conservative Christian writing, but only to differentiate an author as not utilising her (2006: 8). Trudie Stark and Hans van Deventer (2009) engage with her in depth, but focus only on two texts, the 1994 edition of Francis Frangipane’s *The Three Battlegrounds* and John Paul Jackson’s 2002 *Unmasking the Jezebel Spirit*. Their focus, moreover, is primarily exegetical, exploring whether the authors misread scripture in their translation of Queen Jezebel into a demonic principality. The accuracy of their exegesis does not concern me, however—whether the Jezebel of I and II Kings *should* be read as the prefiguration of a ‘Jezebel spirit’ is less relevant than that she *has been*. I am interested in exploring how this ‘Jezebel spirit’ is theopolitically used in the religious-political milieu of contemporary American conservatism. My efforts might thus be seen as a companion to Runions’ *The Babylon Complex* (2014), which takes a similar route regarding Babylon. Indeed, Jezebel and Babylon are often conflated, taking point from the book of Revelation, which draws both explicit and implicit parallels between them (Duff 2001: 91). Yet they are also often figured as a pair of distinct demonic powers, operating in collusion towards the same end—comorbid sister spirits, or ‘religious running mate[s]’ as Jennifer LeClaire puts it (2013: 59).³

Regardless of dynamics, the two are viewed as intimately intertwined. They share a number of crucial similarities. Like Babylon, who functions as a sign of both ungodly diversity and ungodly unity, Jezebel is similarly constructed through both her plurality and her attempts at control, attempts seen by the authors as destined for failure. As discussed in Chapter Two, demons are constructed as always-already doomed by both the structures of prophetic time and by the figuration of God as sole agential force of history. They can disrupt and destroy but never create (order). In figurations of Jezebel this creative lack adopts a specifically gendered, sexual and

³ For direct parallels between Jezebel and Babylon in Revelation, see 2:23 and 17:5, 2:20 and 18:23, 2:20–22 and 17:1–5, 2:20 and 17:6, 2:22 and 17:16.

reproductive form. It is linked narratively to her biblical archetype's childlessness and thematically to the witchcraft with which she is associated, but also politically to the authors' critiques of abortion rights in modern America, which Steve Sampson views as 'attacking the very nature of God, which is *life*' (see also LeClaire 2013: 37–8; 2012: 50; Schott 2013: 93). This connection to abortion is common, foundational and yet simultaneously unsettling to narratives of the texts' considered, because it implies that Jezebel's reproductive irreproducibility may on some level be (at least, to the authors) a choice freely made. This exacerbates the writers' hatred or pity—Landon Schott claims the pro-choice movement trades 'righteousness for a woman's right to choose self-worship', for example (2013: xvi), while Jennifer LeClaire sombrely notes that once 'the life of an unborn child has been sacrificed, other demons harass and even oppress those who have chosen abortion' (2013: 37)—but it also opens the path towards the possibility of a different choosing, a possibility which continually haunts their works.⁴ While the authors emphasise the demonic evil of Jezebel's abortive nature, conflating modern abortion rights with ancient child sacrifice and a lack of foundational potential more generally—that is, that Jezebel's attempts at systemic construction are always-already abortive—the notion that Jezebel might not abort her offspring is a possibility far more terrifying to them.

In examining this unstable and destabilising construction of Jezebel, I focus on two texts: Landon Schott's *Jezebel: The Witch is Back* (2013) and Jennifer LeClaire's *The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel* (2013). These are not the only texts I could have chosen, and others are drawn on to both corroborate and contest my points: Steve Sampson's thematic duology on Jezebel (2012) and Ahab (2010), and LeClaire's 2014 text on *Satan's Deadly Trio* (Jezebel, Religion, and Witchcraft), as well as Francis Frangipane's *Three Battlegrounds* (2006) and *Jezebel Spirit* (1991) are a few such texts (see also: Benson 2010; J. Clark 1998, 2011; Freed 2008, 2012;

⁴ A counterpoint to this would be that it is simply Jezebel's nature to abort her children: she cannot choose otherwise. Thomas Aquinas, among other theologians—often writing contra Origen, who claimed that even the Devil might be saved—concluded that fallen angels only possessed free choice before their choosing, after which they were fixed into a system of action (that is, evil) (DM Q16.A5/2003: 467–74). As a demonic spirit, Jezebel would be unable to choose otherwise. Yet writers like Schott, Sampson and LeClaire are rarely as theologically nuanced as Aquinas; the possibility of Jezebel's choosing otherwise haunts their works, erupting in incredulous statements of the success of the secular systems they oppose.

Jackson 2002; Richter 2005).⁵ I selected these specifically as they are exemplars of the coding of sexuality and gender in contemporary spiritual warfare discourses, diverging and converging in their specificities as they work to weave changing attitudes to personal sexuality and women's liberation into allegedly timeless theopolitical narratives of ownership, sovereignty, legitimacy and control.

The chapter has four main sections. The first introduces spiritual warfare as a discourse of physical and ideological territoriality that divides the world into kingdoms of light and darkness, a territoriality saturated by a colonial logic of property and ownership, where the kingdom of light must colonise that of darkness for the good of the world. The second analyses spiritual warfare's construction of 'Jezebel' as one of the core manifestations of this colonisable darkness, and how this figure of Jezebel is seen as operating in the modern United States. Like spiritual warfare in general, this figuration often hinges on principles of ownership and sovereignty rooted in colonial ideas of property, but also on a gendered metaphysics of presence in which 'woman' is constructed as absence, counterpart to a masculine (divine) presence. In the third section I tie the modern discourses of witchcraft figured in narratives of Jezebel to historic discourses of witchcraft, examining its coding as a demonic subversion linked to a destabilisation and co-option of existing (patriarchal) institutions and practices. Finally, I discuss the relationship constructed between Jezebel and Babylon, whose intertwined efforts act to dismantle a system and build a counterfeit atop its rubble. By looking at Babylon-Jezebel's figuration as the 'lady of the kingdoms' and the cross-contaminating figuration of sexuality and spirituality in gendered discourses of spiritual warfare, I examine how Jezebel operates to unmask the always-already unstable construction of sovereign indivisibility as such.

⁵ Both Schott and LeClaire are evangelical preachers who run independent private ministries (see therev.com and jenniferleclaire.org, respectively). Known as 'the Rev', Schott has a particularly strong media and youth focus, aimed at propagating Jesus across media channels: one of the three stated goals of his ministry is to 'Make Jesus famous', and in 2012 he and his wife launched REVtv.com, a 24/7 online youth and young adult network 'dedicated to turning the heart of a generation to Jesus through Christ centered media'. LeClaire's focus is more print-oriented and directed at women. A self-styled prophet, she is news editor of charismatic magazine *Charisma* and author of several books, boasting of having '100,000 follows on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube' and of having appeared on a number of television programmes. Both Schott and LeClaire represent voices in the proliferation of evangelical 'media ministries' in the contemporary digital age and occupy a specific genealogy of spiritual warfare discourse as it has developed in the post-Cold War era. Their importance is specifically in their typicality within the broader context.

THE CONTESTED TERRITORIES OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The term ‘spiritual warfare’ refers to a particular practice of Christian demonology that originated in traditions of charismatic renewal, specifically 1950s Pentecostalism, but which has now spread into most branches of evangelicalism (Holvast 2009; McCloud 2015; Warren 2012).⁶ E. Janet Warren notes that while warfare imagery has long been part of the practice of demonology, the term was popularised in 1970 as the title of a book by one Michael Harper, a leader in the British charismatic movement (2012: 280). It has since proliferated, blurring between Pentecostalism, evangelicalism and charismatic Christianities, and has been employed to refer to a number of topics, including ‘missiology, counselling, and women’ (*ibid.*). Broadly, the discourse of spiritual warfare extrapolates from the motif of the ‘divine warrior’ into a worldview in which spiritual and material worlds operate as intertwined battlefields in a cosmic struggle for the human soul. As Harold Caballeros, a Guatemalan pastor and area coordinator for the Spiritual Warfare Network clarified, ‘The natural is only a reflection of the spiritual, and a connection between them always exists’ (1993: 124).⁷ He later extrapolates, writing that spiritual warfare is

the conflict between the Kingdom of Light and the kingdom of darkness, or Satan’s kingdom. The two kingdoms are competing for the souls and spirits of the people who inhabit the earth. This results in an ongoing battle involving two realms, the visible realm and the invisible realm. The spiritual battle that takes place in the heavenlies, in the invisible realm, is initiated in the hearts of people and has its final effect here on earth, in the visible realm (*ibid.* 128).

In his 1989 *Three Battlegrounds*, the evangelical preacher Francis Frangipane defines the ‘essence of spiritual warfare’ as a battle over ‘who shall define reality: the Word of God or the illusions of the present age’ (2006: 106). He expands this with a rhetorical question: ‘All spiritual warfare is waged over one essential question: Who will control reality on earth, heaven or hell?’ (*ibid.*: 109). Recalling the Cold War theopolitics I examined above, spiritual warfare might be considered an explicitly religious corollary to Kristol’s ‘key question’ in our ideological age: ‘who owns the

⁶ The language of spiritual warfare has a long history of use within missionary contexts (see Fuller 1994: 47; Kent 2004: 107; Kidd 2009).

⁷ The Spiritual Warfare Network was later renamed the Apostolic Strategic Prayer Network.

future?’ (1983: 263). In spiritual warfare discourses, this is most evident in a concept known as ‘spiritual mapping.’ While the formal movement behind this concept fractured since the millennium (Holvast 2009), the idea still underlies the logic of many contemporary spiritual warfare texts.

Mapping the Battlefields

The concept of ‘spiritual mapping’ was developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s in the US, and is particularly associated with Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, whose Professor C. Peter Wagner popularised the term in his 1993 text *Breaking Strongholds in Your City*. As René Holvast notes, spiritual mapping did not produce any truly new doctrines but repurposed already-existing concepts from Protestant evangelical theology. One of the foremost of these was the ‘ontological and personalized reality of the demonic’, developing a latent dualism in order to apply theological principles to the structure of society (2009: 295). Spiritual mapping emphasised the relation of territory to the demonic, and, as I discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, constructed an emphasis on the ‘10/40 Window’—the space between the 10th and 40th parallels considered the place where Christianity was numerically weakest and was thus the metaphysical stronghold of the ‘last and “very powerful” undefeated demons’ (*ibid.*: xiii).

Holvast ties spiritual mapping directly into the history of civil religion and the impact of the unipolar moment that I elaborated in Chapter Three, bound to the idea of America as a saviour nation with a manifest destiny, whose ‘superior’ civilisation was to be exported to the rest of the world: within the paradigm of spiritual mapping ‘the destiny of the Christian version of the US was manifest’ (*ibid.*: 286). Within the US itself, the development of seemingly anti-Christian paradigms of thought in the advance of gay and lesbian rights, abortion rights, multireligious and multicultural paradigms and the development of a globalisation that fractured US identity as much as it expanded it, caused evangelicals to project the idea of a enemy grander and more unified than these individual struggles: ‘The threat could not be human—it came from behind the scenes, from Satan and his forces’ (*ibid.*: 289).

Spiritual warfare discourse are thus founded on the radical interconnectedness of heaven and earth, in which believers’ hearts effect and are affected by changes in

the spiritual realm. Closely linked to traditions of apocalypticism, much contemporary or ‘Third Wave’ spiritual warfare literature assumes humanity is living in the end-times, in which ‘Satan has amassed an army of evil spirits that he is using to attack and demonize humans in an effort to win their souls for hell’ (McCloud 2013: 170).⁸ As such, spiritual warfare is highly territorial, both in terms of real geographical territory and of discursive or ideological territory, with non-evangelical lands and beliefs being construed as the abode of demonic presences that requires expurgation (*ibid.*). The language used is often highly militaristic. Drawing on popular texts, Warren (2012: 280) lists the following examples:

Frank and Ida Mae Hammond proclaim that ‘spiritual warfare’ involves weapons of the blood of Jesus and the word of God. Mark Bubeck believes Ephesians is ‘the Christian’s handbook on spiritual warfare against the devil and his kingdom’. This battle involves ‘hand-to-hand combat’ and forces of evil operate like a military organization. George Mallone advises Christians to choose weapons wisely, prepare for battle, wear appropriate armor, and have a battle plan. Timothy Warner refers to the ‘Christian offensive’, ‘Christian defensive’, and ‘ultimate weapon’. C. Peter Wagner uses the term ‘strategic-level spiritual warfare’ to discuss battles with territorial spirits (as opposed to ‘ground-level’ warfare, which involves deliverance of individuals).

Although these are not the texts I focus on, the language is familiar. LeClaire talks of ‘a season when kings go to war...If you do not go to war when you are called to go to war, then you are out of God’s will and you open the door for the enemy’ (2013: 96). Sampson says that we must ‘equip ourselves with new resolve’ lest we become ‘emasculated and weakened’ (2012: 187). Schott compares one with an ‘Ahab’ spirit to an ‘arms dealer that enables [Jezebel’s] wars’ and laments that ‘If men of God would take their rightful authority in their churches, workplaces, and families...her tyranny would come to an end’ (2013: 90). Immediately noticeable is the alignment of warfare with masculinity, which I examine further below. Here, I want to focus on the overall structures of spiritual warfare, its associated questions of allegiance, and its

⁸ The term ‘Third Wave’ was coined in 1988 by C. Peter Wagner, to differentiate what he and his colleagues saw as a new evangelical movement from its two ‘earlier’ waves—the birth of Pentecostalism at the turn of the twentieth century and the subsequent charismatic revival of the 1960s and early 1970s (Holvast 2009). McCloud notes that while ‘Third Wave’ beliefs have received little attention from scholars, they infiltrate and inform a wide range of evangelical practices, including Pat Robertson’s 2010 claim that the Haitian earthquake was caused by a pact the nation’s founders made with Satan, former vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin’s videotaped deliverance prayer by an African exorcist, and broader missionary strategies in the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa and Asia (2013: 169).

embeddedness in ideological frameworks of ownership reflective of the ‘evangelical-capitalist resonance machine’ (Connolly 2008) I explored above.

The Site of Ownership

While the contemporary paradigm of spiritual warfare dates back to the fifties, more recent texts produced during and since the rise of spiritual mapping often encode discourses of ownership and property that echo the syncretisation of capitalism and (Protestant) Christianity. As the Cold War drew to a close and spiritual mapping first began to coalesce, Francis Frangipane published his bestselling *Three Battlegrounds* (2006), in which he encapsulates this particular theopolitical fusion: ‘This author does not believe that a Christian can be possessed,’ he writes, ‘for possession implies ownership. If one has given his life to Christ, he has become the property of the Son of God and is, in truth, purchased by Christ’ (*ibid.*: 29).

Yet, while Frangipane does not believe Christians can be possessed, he clarifies that ‘Christians can be oppressed by demons, which can occupy unregenerated thought systems, especially if those thoughts are defended by self-deception or false doctrines’ (*ibid.*). These systems are the province of darkness and ‘Satan has a legal access, given to him by God, to dwell in the domain of darkness’ (*ibid.*: 14). He can traffic in any area of darkness, including that within the hearts of believers. This darkness is both moral and literal. It is constituted by an absence, but ‘its cause is not simply the absence of light; it is the absence of God, who is light’ (*ibid.*). Here, Frangipane sets up a schema that will become familiar. The believer, who has given themselves to Christ, is already owned, and so can only be troubled but never owned by demons; meanwhile, Satan has only ‘legal access’ to domains situated in or constituted by ‘darkness’. This darkness is an absence waiting to be filled: Satan has access, never ownership, because only God is capable of ownership. Thus, darkness is little merely unclaimed wilderness awaiting mastery, one in which demons dwell but over which they cannot claim true purchase—an ideological territorialisation that extends past the theological realm to the geopolitical one,

predominantly the global south or ‘developing world’ that has yet to be conquered in God’s name (McCloud 2013: 169).⁹

While the colonial logic of missionary work in spiritual warfare is noteworthy, for Frangipane and many later authors the home front is often the most crucial. Those spiritual warriors who focus on the spirit of Jezebel—John Paul Jackson (2002), Landon Schott (2013), Jennifer LeClaire (2013, 2014), Steve Sampson (2010, 2012), Don Richter (2005), Sandie Freed (2008, 2012), and others—the primary spiritual battleground is America itself. This introduces a difference in emphasis within spiritual warfare—while missionary work can be viewed as an expansion of God’s territory into the dark places of the world (i.e. the ‘10/40 Window’), the presence of ‘unregenerated thought systems’ in home territory represents an encroachment onto God’s own property. This is noticeable in the emphasis placed by writers on the Church, which, Sampson writes, is ‘the ultimate prize the kingdom of darkness focuses on for destruction’ (2012: 50), and in their conflation of the integrity of the Body of the Church with that of the human body. Made apparent in the conflation of sexual purity with spiritual purity, extrapolated through the Jezebel narrative, this double-B/body ties into identifications of the foremost of ‘unregenerated thought systems’—the shifting cultural attitudes to gender and sexuality viewed as both cause and symptom of a broader drift from (true, Christian) religion toward godless, hedonistic secularism.

This focus on the body conflating spiritual and sexual purity encodes an insidious logic of property. LeClaire (2013: 30, 160) and Schott (2013: 102) both cite I Corinthians 6:18 as evidence for their claims: ‘Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins

⁹ One might link this to the confluence of Pentecostal Christianities and the global market that has been noted by certain scholars. Simon Coleman, for example, has argued that ‘Pentecostal Christians create a global culture which creates a multidimensional, yet culturally specific, sense of reaching out into an unbounded realm of action and identity,’ one whose global spread is augmented by mass communications, global travel, and conferences (2000: 6). Discussing the relationship between Pentecostalism and development, Päivi Hasu notes that ‘Pentecostal Christianity embeds neoliberalism particularly well’ due to a confluence of values, such as an emphasis on social mobility based on merit or a ‘code of conduct’ that prevents people falling into poverty, and more generally by offering ‘moral and spiritual explanations about how modernity, the global market economy and the structural adjustment programmes’ affect individuals and groups, as well as providing ‘new ways for followers to act in situations where they increasingly feel powerless and frustrated’ (2012: 70). While worth bearing in mind, there are significant differences between spiritual warfare doctrines aimed at and within the ‘developing world’ and those aimed at the US itself.

against his own body'. Schott continues this citation through verses nineteen and twenty: 'Don't you realise that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body' (2013: 102). Tying this focus on the body into spiritual warfare's narratives of ownership and darkness, it is not merely that homosexuality and other 'sexual sins' are constructed as defiling the image of God in the human, but that God has already paid the price for your body and thus already owns it. Your body is not yours, and so you have no actual right to do with it as you will.¹⁰ This is why Schott categorises the pro-choice movement as having 'traded righteousness for a woman's right to choose self-worship' (2013: xvi). Ownership and determination of self are constructed as idolatry, a worshipping of the human and of human artifice rather than of the true Creator. Any belief a person might hold about their rights to their own flesh and blood is little more than an illusion, a false concept of the ownership of a darkness that is nothing but the absence of light, of a God who is light. At best, it is a legal access that can, and ultimately will be rescinded.

How specifically does the demonic figure of Jezebel fit into this interplay of (self-)ownership and absence, and why is it she that becomes the focus of the authors' ire? Jezebel's role in this discourse often hinges on the interplay of two intertwining aspects of her character. One is gender, or rather her apparent overturning of divinely given gender norms and hierarchies. The second is idolatry and witchcraft, which tie into her relationship to Babylon and to concepts of (il)legitimate hierarchy and control. The following two sections focus on these aspects of her figuration, respectively.

¹⁰ Considering the historical connections of the 'Jezebel' to African-American slavery, female sexuality and sexual exploitation in U.S. history, in which the projection of the biblical archetype served to explain 'the slave owners' sexual attraction to and sexual abuse of African American women' by constructing them as 'promiscuous and sexually permissive' (D.L. Brown, White-Johnson and Griffin-Fennell 2013: 526), it is difficult not to see an underlying logic of racialised master-slave relations operating here.

WOMAN, FOREIGNER, IDOLATER: JEZEBEL'S TRIPLE ALTERITY

In the spiritual battlefield of gender and sexuality Jezebel is one of the most recurring images of the enemy. Latter parts of Frangipane's *Battlegrounds* are devoted to her, and he later wrote a whole book dedicated to her, *The Jezebel Spirit* (1991). In case there might have been confusion about what this spirit represents, Frangipane makes it clear: 'When we speak of Jezebel, we are identifying the source in our society of obsessive sensuality, unbridled witchcraft, and hatred for male authority' (2006: 123). He clarifies that, while the demonic spirit of Jezebel is technically genderless, 'it is important to note that Jezebel is more attracted to the uniqueness of the female psyche in its sophisticated ability to manipulate without physical force' (*ibid.*). Other authors contest this, holding that the spirit affects men and women equally—indeed, most are at pains to stress the genderlessness of the Jezebel Spirit. However, as John Paul Jackson notes in his foreword to Schott's text, the spirit often leaves men 'weakened and emasculated' by its presence (Schott 2013: xi). Of the authors I focus on, Schott emphasises the genderlessness of the Jezebel spirit but still uses female pronouns to refer to her, while LeClaire is more nebulous, referring to the Jezebel spirit mostly as 'it', but also glossing it as a 'goddess' and equating the spirit with the Phoenician goddess Ashtoreth whom Jezebel worshipped (2013: 24); ultimately, she never truly disputes its female gender identification, merely its 'biological' sex.

Genderless Spirit and Spirit of Genderlessness

The Jezebel spirit's stressed genderlessness is neither coincidental nor a mere appeal to the non-biological (and thus *de facto* unsexed) nature of demonic spirits. Rarely do authors feel the need to stress the genderless nature of demons who appear male (Satan being a quintessential example). On the surface it might initially seem that the authors are attempting to make their work more appealing to women by declaring the non-womanhood of a spiritual being that bears a woman's name. This may be part of it. Yet, as I shall show, the primary function of the spirit of Jezebel in the narratives constructed by the authors is through its disruption and overturning of traditional gender roles and performances. 'Jezebel' is not merely a 'genderless' spirit, but to a

certain extent a spirit of genderlessness itself; that is, of the overturning of gender as an essential, binary, innate and (importantly) divinely-granted aspect of being. This overturning includes not just a rise in ‘dominant’ women and the alleged ‘emasculatation of men in our society’ (Schott 2013: xv) but also discourses of gay and lesbian rights and the increasing normalisation in parts of the West of the practice of sex before marriage (LeClaire 2013: 37–40), as well as other practices the authors define as sexually immoral. Whilst the inclusion of witchcraft by Frangipane, something belaboured by Schott, among a cavalcade of specifically sexual sins might seem strange, the connection between sexual immorality and religious idolatry is a recurrent theme in both the Bible and the texts here. Idolatry is often equated with adultery, specifically with a wife’s betrayal of her husband’s legitimate authority: the Church, God’s Bride, must remain steadfast and loyal to him (LeClaire 2013: 27–44; Schott 2013: 1–9). I return to this image of the bride below. Moreover, the connection between sexual immorality and idolatry links the spiritual Jezebel consciously to the Biblical character from which its name is taken: Queen Jezebel, whose triple alterity (woman, foreigner, idolater) are crucial to her narrative function.

The story of Queen Jezebel is told in I and II Kings. Steve Sampson gives a brief narrative of her life as the daughter of the high priest of Baal, Ethbaal, who comes to Israel as the bride of the king, Ahab, and ultimately corrupts God’s people to worship of her own, false, deities. He concludes his tale with an explanation of the connection between Jezebel the woman and Jezebel the spirit, stating that ‘young Jezebel was raised under two pagan deities [Ashtoreth and Baal]. She became a wicked and rebellious queen who usurped the rulership of Israel...Because of the control she exercised and the tactics she used to exert illegitimate and wicked control’ her name has become synonymous with the spirit (2012: 20). LeClaire puts it more succinctly with: ‘Queen Jezebel so personified the spirit of Jezebel that this is what we call it’ (2013: 20). For the authors concerned, Jezebel’s worship and veneration of other (false) gods is intrinsically linked to her overturning of the traditional roles of womanhood and patriarchal authority and to the proliferation of unsanctified sexual practices—what Sampson calls her ‘thirty-year reign of iniquity’ (2012: 21). Schott connects polytheism to sexual license openly: ‘Through the worship of Baal’, he writes, ‘came the god *Dagon*, for Baal was the son of Dagon. Baal, Dagon, Ashtoreth,

and Molech combined for the erotic acts of perverted heterosexual relations, homosexual activity, violent sexual acts, body piercing (including genitals), body cutting, and an infatuation with blood...prostitution, and ceremonial orgies' (2013: 4). Sexual deviance and the displacement of divine, masculine, monotheistic authority are here conflated as part and parcel of the activity of the same demonic power.

Using the story of Queen Jezebel, quintessential embodiment of the demonic spirit, as the ground of their texts, the authors tie a narrative of gender and sexuality to one of the legitimacy of authority, authority that is ultimately God's but is vested in those mortal men (and they are men) who obey his godly laws. Queen Jezebel is an idolater and thus also an adulterer, one who rejects legitimacy and venerates lies and deceit. She turns her Israelite husband Ahab also to idolatry, away from worship of the true God, and supplants God's authority—traditional, male, monotheistic, and legitimate—with her own—foreign, female, polytheistic, and illegitimate. Ultimately in the narrative, Queen Jezebel is given over to a gruesome death, defenestrated and trampled under hoof at the behest of the prophet Jehu, her body later torn apart and devoured by dogs (II Kings 9:30–37). The servants of the true God emerge victorious, just as—due to the preordained structure of apocalyptic time and the repetition of prophetic moments—the spiritual warrior-authors assure themselves of their victory over the spirit to which they give her name (LeClaire 2013: 16; Schott 2013: xv), even if some of them, such as Sampson, express bewilderment over how those they identify as working for this spirit seem to go from strength to strength (2012: 39).

The Absence of (Hetero)Normativity

In this narrative of the reinstatement of godly patriarchal power, however, true authority does not really belong to Ahab, Jezebel's Israelite husband, but to God. Indeed, Steve Sampson details in *Discerning and Defeating the Ahab Spirit* (2010) that Ahab becomes if not equally then at least partially culpable for Jezebel's sins: by surrendering to her will, Ahab abdicates his divinely-ordained role—as ruler, man, and man-as-ruler. His passivity, his inability to perform the active, masculine gender role God intended, condemns him too. This 'Ahab spirit', however, is merely a supplement to Jezebel, the illegitimate passivity that permits her illegitimate activity: 'men she had stripped of their manhood and authority...[those who] have become

eunuchs—slaves—to this demonic force’ (Sampson 2012: 42). As the spirit that actively creates and maintains the disruption of the institutions of patriarchal monotheism, it is Jezebel who bears the brunt of their wrath. Schott (2013: 1) even ties her operations to the very meaning of Jezebel’s name, although as a Biblical literalist he does not question whether this name might have been altered or given wholesale to the character posthumously:

When Ahab, the reigning king of Israel, married Jezebel he directly aligned God’s people with God’s enemy. It is remarkable that anyone would enter into a marriage or an alliance with a woman whose name means *without dwelling or cohabitation, unmarried, uncommitted or unhusbanded*. Jezebel will *not submit*. The word *unhusbanded* means, *to refuse to live in a peaceful cohabitation*.

As this brief sketch begins to make clear, from the outset those spiritual warfare texts which emphasise Jezebel as their primary opponent set themselves into a narrative in which the performances of gender are intimately tied to ideas of rulership, sovereignty, territory, of who rules and has the right to rule—both in the household and the nation. To overturn this structure is to cast the world into chaos. Though their emphases differ by degrees, the authors considered here cast the Jezebel spirit as one of the primary demonic actors at work in the modern world, if not the primary one. Much like the spiritual warriors examined in the following chapter, the struggle against this modern enemy is also one against an ancient, timeless opponent, and it involves the repetition of an ancient history. For the authors discussed in Chapter Six this period is the Days of Noah, whereas for Frangipane, LeClaire, Schott, and others it is the days of Elijah and (ultimately) of Jehu. And as the etymology of Jezebel’s name is brought forth as an indicator of her nature, so too is Jehu’s. Sampson glosses it as meaning ‘Jehovah is He’ (2012: 40). The prophet is thereby cast in the role of the uncompromising husband (God) returned to discipline his unruly bride (Israel/the Church) and re-exert a patriarchal authority that had become weak and emasculated under Jezebel’s iniquitous reign.

This cycle—the degrading of legitimate male authority and its reinstatement—is viewed by the authors as recurring in multiple narratives in the Bible, each time attributed to the machinations of the Jezebel spirit: ‘Jezebel’s footprint appears many times in Scripture, and many times in history’, writes Mark Chironna in his foreword to *Confronting Jezebel* (Sampson 2012: 8). Sampson identifies the Jezebel spirit not

merely in Queen Jezebel herself but in the biblical personages of Herodias, Korah, and Absalom (2012: 44–5, 93–100). Schott lists Delilah, Saul, Haman, Sanballat, and the Pharisees (2013: 71–82). LeClaire focuses on Nimrod’s wife, Semiramis, and links Jezebel broadly to Babylon, the ‘Lady of Kingdoms’, weaving a narrative in which this pair of demonic powers work in collusion to undermine and usurp God’s authority (2013: 59–72). Schott also describes this partnership in his discussion of the Jezebel Spirit at work in modern sexuality (2013: 101). I return to it fully in section four. In all the texts, however, these Biblical characters are interwoven with anecdotes about individuals which the authors have encountered in life and believe are under the thrall of the Jezebel spirit. It is through this trans-historical overview that the authors transform the figure of the foreign queen into that of a demonic principality working from the spiritual realm, translating a contemporary ideological conflict into a timeless battle of good and evil. Echoing Caballeros and many Third Wave authors, Sampson (2012: 29) sketches this conflict’s eschatological horizon:

The spiritual world, with its opposing forces of good and evil, is a world that is in one sense more real and relevant than the natural realm we live in. The kingdom of darkness is waging all-out war against the Kingdom of God, and the Bible tells us that as spirit beings, we are caught in a struggle between these two realms...In these last days of the Church, the thrust of the enemy is mighty as he tries to establish strongholds in people’s minds and seduce our world to come under the control of Jezebel and other evil principalities and powers.

These ‘last days of the Church’ are the contemporary era, and this era is a repetition of the era of Jezebel and Elijah. ‘Through technology,’ Sampson writes, ‘the devil and his forces have access to the masses, and as in the days of Elijah, the majority submits and serves Baal’ (*ibid.*: 31). This repetition of time is a repetition of ancient conflict: ‘Jezebel came against Elijah in his day,’ claims Schott, ‘and her spirit comes against those of us who carry the spirit and heart of Elijah in this day’ (2013: 73). But as the forces of God triumphed then, so today that stage is being set for Jezebel to be thrown down: ‘as it was in the days of Elijah, so it is today that...God is whispering that Jezebel must come down’ (Chironna in Sampson 2012: 10). According to Schott, this is ‘the end when God pours His Spirit out onto His people’ (2013: 73). For the authors considered here, the structure of apocalyptic time assures ultimate victory. Jezebel

will always be cast down from her window: it may be a question of ‘when’, but this ‘when’ is always ‘soon’.

Jezebel’s Tools

The eschatological place of technology is a recurrent theme in apocalyptic discourses, though the technologies themselves vary with the era and the authors’ chosen other. For these authors, the technologies focused on are television, film, the internet, music, and fashion; the main media of popular culture through which images and messages can be disseminated to the public and which are filled, according to Sampson, with ‘violence, filthiness, sexual unwholesomeness and disrespect for authority’ (2012: 52). Much of their ire is concentrated on the pornography industry. Sampson calls it ‘Jezebel’s most effective arena’ (*ibid.*), while Schott includes it as the climax of a list that includes Hollywood (which has ‘spread [Jezebel’s] perversions and sexuality across the world’), secularist professors and academics (‘who hate God and love to try and disprove Him’), and abortion rights (which ‘has traded righteousness for a woman’s right to choose self-worship’), perhaps intended as an escalating itinerary of corruptions. He remarks that pornography ‘prepares individuals to destroy their marriages’ (2013: xv, 101–11).

Pornography comes up frequently in LeClaire’s text as well, tied to idolatry: ‘*porneia*...means “illicit sexual intercourse.” It is also a metaphor for the worship of idols’, she notes. Then: ‘Christians are serving the idol of pornography. And the Spirit of Jezebel is pushing it’ (2013: 41–2). Moreover, this idol is often invoked in relation to other media forms: LeClaire makes reference to ‘semi-pornographic broadcasts that air on prime-time television’ (2013: 101). She never clarifies what she means by ‘semi-pornographic’, but it is likely related to a statement made by Schott in which he compares watching films that contain nudity to an individual stripping off their clothes in front of you or your spouse (2013: 103). Ire is also directed at works that contain no nudity, however. As part of a diatribe against modern media, Sampson refers explicitly to ‘sitcoms that undermine the family and male authority, which are largely written by homosexuals...who have found acceptance from those with a far-left agenda’ (2012: 52). Hollywood is (perhaps obviously) named as a bastion of the

Jezebel Spirit, as are (perhaps surprisingly) talk shows, ‘which more and more exalt unrighteous thinking’ (*ibid.*). No examples are presented.

Outside the media, the discourse of gay and lesbian rights is taken as a central form of Jezebel’s demonic campaign to usurp the place of God, though the discourse is viewed as closely tied to the media. ‘Homosexuality has driven its agenda into the heart of society’, Schott writes, ‘and we are watching God’s institution of marriage trampled at the feet of “tolerance and equality”’ (2013: xvi). Jezebel ‘is an advocate for homosexuality’, he informs his readers later: it is ‘part of her religion.’ Why? Because it undermines God’s commandment that men and women reproduce (*ibid.*: 108). The legal battle in contemporary America to cast anti-gay and lesbian rhetoric as hate speech is also a tool of Jezebel (*ibid.*).¹¹ Schott includes as part of his tirade against gay and lesbian rights the pithy if not unterrifying statement that ‘Pride is the enemy of God’, with all intended meanings (*ibid.*: 107), and LeClaire is just as vehement in her assignation of the acceptance of gay, lesbian and transgender individuals as a main vehicle of the Jezebel spirit in working towards the attempted usurpation of the Kingdom of God by that of darkness (2013: 82, 164). In the middle of an exegesis of Paul’s letter to the Romans regarding the proliferation of sexual immorality, she writes the following:

Although Jezebel’s influence is not limited to homosexual activity—any form of sexual immorality will do—the Jezebel deception is what causes gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender people to believe that they can willfully embrace abominations—never declaring war on the temptation—and still enter the Kingdom of heaven’ (*ibid.*: 82).

We see here the return of the Church-centred discourse of demonic counter-colonisation I touched on above, in which infiltration of Christian structures (here, soteriology) is figured as one of the foremost strategies of the demonic other. LeClaire holds that while to a certain degree sin is sin, sexual sins are more serious than others (*ibid.*: 101), an attitude manifesting throughout her text as she labours the connection between sex and idolatry in both scripture and the modern world. In one of the few sections that (obliquely) touches on race, she discusses South Florida and through juxtaposition links the state’s high percentage of gay, lesbian and bisexual

¹¹ LeClaire is eager to inform her readers that ‘Legalism is also a doctrine of demons’ (2013: 50). This alignment is an important part of its historic genealogy, and is a trait I analysed in the preceding chapter in the context of demonological figurations of Islam.

citizens (second, she claims, only to California) to the diversity of religious practices, notably ‘Santeria from Cuba, voodoo from Haiti and Rastafari from Jamaica—and God knows what other devils from various other parts of the world’ (*ibid.*: 164). South Florida is, for LeClaire, a region deeply in thrall to the Jezebel spirit, where diversity of religious and sexual practices reign supreme. Jezebel here is the foreigner, who brings her false gods from ‘various other parts of the world’, though exactly where only ‘God knows’. The faiths LeClaire selects also draw an unstated but clear link to African-American communities and thereby to the figuration of ‘the jezebel’ as one of most pernicious and enduring stereotypes of African-American women as sexually permissive and promiscuous (Brown, White-Johnson and Griffin-Fennell 2013: 526). Emerging from the legacy of slavery, the jezebel ‘is perceived as seductive, manipulative, and unable to control her sexual drives’, a construction that operated historically to justify her enslavement and sexual violation by white slave-owners (Townsend et al. 2010: 274).

Given the existence of this stereotype, race is rarely if ever mentioned by any of the writers. However, ideas of manipulation—from Jezebel’s manipulation of Ahab to her manipulation of Israelite faith, casting it into idolatry and sexual immorality, are central. Indeed, while the three aspects of Jezebel’s alterity—woman, foreigner, and idolater—are the central threads that inform and wend their way through all the texts they are not the main topic. This is reserved for issues of control, domination and manipulation: these areas are at the heart of what the writers term ‘witchcraft’, and are tied to the concept of rebellion. ‘It’s very important for you to understand that witchcraft is simply about controlling the will of another person’, writes Schott, adding: ‘A rebellious person will directly or indirectly try to control others’ (2013: 37). LeClaire asks the reader ‘How do we see Jezebel manifesting?’ and answers: ‘The Bible talks about rebellion as the sin of witchcraft’ (2013: 164). Sampson tells us that ‘Witchcraft definitely involves manipulation. Jezebel control is behavior that operates through a person to control others by the use of manipulative, domineering and intimidating tactics’ (2012: 25). Just in case the readers might suspect that he is just writing an anti-bullying tract, however, he clarifies later on that ‘[a]s understood from a biblical perspective, witchcraft is anything that usurps the authority and influence of the Holy Spirit in a person’s life’ (*ibid.*: 53), and later adds that

‘Witchcraft is nothing more than illegitimately controlling the will of another’ (*ibid.*: 113). In the next section, I consider this discourse of witchcraft as it ties into historic formulations of witchcraft I explored in Chapter One.

WITCHCRAFT, POWER, AND (IL)LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY

The significant portions of the texts dedicated to the subject of control and domination are intriguing because they shed a different light on the themes listed above, though as I will show Jezebel’s triple alterity is still central. Schott devotes a chapter to listing the negative traits of people bearing Jezebel’s spirit: jealousy, charm, hate, savvy, slyness, lack of consideration for others, cunning, being calculating and strife-causing, having a domineering and mean-spirited personality that refuses to back down and is eager to lord expertise over others, among various other traits (2013: 37–50). Other authors contain similar lists, if not as comprehensive. Their books are littered with personal anecdotes, narrating tales of domineering and abusive persons and how such behaviour leads to destructive effects in communities and interpersonal relationships. These narratives are varied, such as a tale of a ‘Pastor Charles’, a domineering pastor who ruled his flock with an iron fist (Sampson 2012: 157–9), a ‘Kathryn’, the leader of a prayer team whose jealousy led her to sabotage and undermine others (Schott 2013: 11–12), or of ‘Rick’ and ‘Sammy’, a drug-addict and alcoholic whose sins were tolerated and ignored, causing them to spiral deeper into damaging habits (LeClaire 2013: 58, 118–19). In the latter, LeClaire makes clear that the Jezebel spirit was not only in ‘Rick’ and ‘Sammy’ but also in the congregation that ignored them in order to focus upon itself (*ibid.*). In addition to the contemporary tales are the scriptural examples listed earlier: Herodias, Korah, and Absalom (Sampson 2012: 44–5, 93–100), Delilah, Saul, Haman, Sanballat, and the Pharisees (Schott 2013: 71–82). All are seen as individuals in acts of rebellion—witchcraft—that lead to the promotion of discord in place of unity.

A Practice of Spiritual Subversion

It is in the triple identification of control with witchcraft with rebellion that it becomes easier to discern the underlying demonological/ideological structures that run through these and other spiritual warfare texts. In all the examples the authors present where the individuals found some kind of redemption, the solution was to be found in dedicating themselves to God and the Holy Spirit. Recall that Sampson's definition of the art of witchcraft is the act of illegitimately controlling the will of another person (Sampson 2012: 113), thus leaving room open for concepts of legitimate hierarchy, of a right order of things. In the minds of the authors, it appears that the abuse meted out by Jezebel is to some extent secondary to the disruption and discord it sows; it is at least an effect, not a cause of that discord.

The same mentality is detectable in their various objections to the media and 'deviant' sexualities: the problem is less the 'sins' themselves, but the disruption of the divinely-ordained status quo, the telic order or orthotaxy, which these sins cause and are caused by. While there is thematic unity in the works—the Jezebel spirit is always one that promotes disruption of divine order—one cannot help but feel that the phenomena the authors discuss are, in reality, distinct. The modern fight for gay and lesbian rights and the actions of an abusive and domineering preacher who kowtows his flock through fear of damnation do not, on the surface, seem to have much linking them. (Perhaps apart from the very formation and maintenance of the restrictive and god-given status quo that the authors writing contra both of these seem so keen to uphold.) It would be easy to ascribe this to a flaw inherent in dualistic thinking, where all evil and all good are assigned to distinctive and mutually exclusive spheres. This may be true, but it is not the whole truth. The topic requires deeper examination, because it ties closely into the ways in which the Jezebel spirit has been constructed and to the underlying logic of gendered spiritual warfare discourses which map onto the broader demonological structure which this thesis is examining.

Discourses of witchcraft as demonological practice are historically tied to ideas of spiritual, sexual, and political subversion or excess, as I have touched on in previous chapters. The iconic description of the black mass, taken from the 1437 *Erroris Gazariorum*, lays this out explicitly:

After having sworn and promised these things, the poor seduced person adores the presiding devil by giving homage to him, and as a sign of homage he kisses the devil, appearing in human or in another form...on the buttocks or anus, giving to him as tribute one of his own limbs after death. After which all the members of that pestiferous sect celebrate the admittance of the new heretic, eating whatever is around them, especially murdered children, roasted or boiled. When this most wicked feast is completed, after they have danced as much as they desired, the presiding devil then cries, while extinguishing the light, 'mestlet, mestlet!' After they hear his voice, immediately they join together carnally, one man with one woman, or one man with one man, and sometimes father with daughter, son with mother, brother with sister...scarcely observing the natural order (in Bailey 2003: 1).

Almond notes in his discussion of the black mass that the initiate would accede to certain duties as part of his or her initiation, including killing as many children under the age of three as possible, and using black magic to impede sexual intercourse in every marriage whenever possible (2014: 98). Both Russell (1972: 238) and Velasco (2011: 64) translate 'meslet, mestlet' as 'get in there and mix it up', presaging the orgiastic ritual. Notably, lesbian sexuality is absent from the description, but Sherry Velasco notes that accusations of lesbianism accompanied at times that of witchcraft, establishing the 'conceptual link between sexual deviance and spiritual deviance', in which both 'were perceived as deliberate and willful challenges to the natural order established by God and nature' (2011: 64). These claims can be expanded here to the black mass, in which disruption of the 'natural order' of sexuality serves as the climax of the heretical ritual. Regardless, we perceive the satanic pseudosacrament of the black mass and the duties allegedly given to initiates the same obsessions of sexual order, religious purity and inheritance (in the alleged child sacrifice and dedication to impeding sexual intercourse in marriage) that are the fixations of Schott, LeClaire, Sampson, and others.

Alain Boureau (2006) discusses the mechanisms of the black mass explicitly through the lens of a demonic co-opting of the divine order and describes the arising and attempted solution of a demonic contradiction in orthodox writings on witchcraft: it became clear to certain commentators that the heretics partaking in such Satanic sacraments drew their power not from God or God's power vested in an object (like Moses' brazen serpent), but from Satan. However, Satan lacked creative potentiality, seemingly creating a contradiction. The solution constructed, Boureau narrates, was

that Satan's ubiquity and power over the material world allowed him to subvert the Christian sacramental rites and direct them to unintended and ungodly ends. Lacking creative capacity, Satan 'needed to redirect a significant Christian structure, [such as] baptism' (*ibid.*: 62). Through this appropriation and corruption, the Devil was capable of influencing the world in a more universal sense. As detailed in Chapter One, witchcraft became a form of heretical contagion, a contagion that was transmitted by the witch as vector of postulated 'heretical networks' of enemies to Christian order.

~~Christendom~~ America Must Be Defended

This historical discourse of witchcraft parallels the modern discourse of witchcraft constructed by the authors as a core facet of the Jezebel spirit. This is not to say that the writers draw directly on this earlier discourse, but that they are positioned in a demonologico-political genealogy that can shed substantial light on the contemporary discourse. In the figure of Jezebel 'sexual deviance and spiritual deviance' are again conceptually linked, and bound up with a theopolitical strategy of demonic insurgency into a territory the conceptual unity of which is seen as paramount. Here, however, the theopolitical homogeneity of the United States replaces that of medieval Christendom, and the indivisibility of its sovereignty is equally illusory and (thus) prescriptive. This ties into the theopolitics of identity I examined above, in which the messianic structures of American civil religion help to produce the image of a walled enclosure, an American Paradise, whose manifest destiny makes it the driving force of a theologico-geopolitical soteriology. The 'culture wars' in which this subset of spiritual warfare discourse can be located relied on the differentiation of an authentic citizen (heterosexual, capitalist, religious, white and male) from the horrors of radical alterity, one conservative writers and commentators saw as increasingly manifest in America itself. As I touched on above, the sexual and gender politics of the culture wars were of particular import, with much discourse centred on threats to the 'nuclear family' as a prime conveyance of cultural unity. As Norman Podhoretz wrote against gay rights:

My position on gay rights has to do with my fear of the rise and spread of tendencies in this society and in this culture which undermine in a very drastic way the possibility of maintaining the family as the key institution of our society, and of raising our children and our grandchildren in a

context which makes it possible for them to live and take their place in the natural chain of the generations (in Dershowitz 1991: 202–3).

Podhoretz here touches on the same emphasis on family dynamics as Schott, LeClaire, and others. The ‘natural chain of the generations’ speaks to the notion of legacy and inheritance that the writers contrast with Jezebel’s childlessness and abortive qualities. This logic is tied to the same concepts of idolatrous child sacrifice as that deployed in the description of the black mass. ‘Some theologians’, LeClaire notes, though she names no names, ‘connect abortion today to the bloodthirsty god of Molek, indicating that an unwanted pregnancy that ends with the child’s death is, arguably, a sacrifice to this demon’ (2013: 37). Schott links it directly to Jezebel, writing that ‘Queen Jezebel worshipped the false god, Baal, which included child sacrifice. This included the murder of the unborn (abortion) and newborn babies. When female prostitutes of Baal were impregnated during religious “services,” they would sacrifice these conceived children to Baal’ (2013: 93). ‘There is no inheritance for an aborted child’, he adds (*ibid.*), and then ties ideas about inheritance or legacy into the broader role of the Church as, in the words of Sampson, ‘the ultimate prize the kingdom of darkness focuses on’ (2012: 50). Satan lacks creative power and must therefore appropriate the prevailing structures of Christianity itself.

Jezebel’s witchcraft is assigned to her partly on the basis of her triple alterity. While the authors figure witchcraft through the lens of quasi-mystical control resulting from a dominant personality, it is primarily the assertion of an illegitimate order—female, polytheistic, foreign—over a legitimate one—male, monotheistic, and native. (In the biblical narrative this ‘nativeness’ is Israelite, for our authors it is American; both, of course, originate outside the realities they carve out as their own.) The methods of the ‘witchcraft’ in these texts, abhorrent as they are, are second to its goal: the disruption and dislocation of ‘proper’, telic order. This disruption is never figured as stemming from something internal to the Church or its teachings, but is projected out onto an external force or system that comes from without. This external system is one of illegitimate authority, an order that is different or of difference, which is figured as radically destabilised and unable to set roots. LeClaire equates this with ‘the spirit of the world’ in contrast to and in conflict with the spirit of God (2013: 60), and for all the authors the reassertion of a telic order of correct Christian doctrine

and practice is figured as the only way to restore balance and curb the deviancy and abusive control of those in thrall to Jezebel.

However, in keeping with her opposition to a unitary, masculine order, Jezebel does not work alone. She is one of main forces of this heterotaxic structure, but she is not the only one. One of her main partners is, according to LeClaire, Babylon, another antagonistic biblical force coded as female. While, for LeClaire, Babylon's exact position on the demonological hierarchy is ambiguous, her connection to Jezebel is clear (*ibid.* 61). She devotes considerable space to this partnership, enumerating the ways these spirits work in collusion to undermine the authentic structures of society—of America as, to quote Pat Buchanan, godfather of the modern culture wars, 'God's country' (1992: n.p.).

JEZEBEL-BABYLON: ABSENT, MULTIPLE

LeClaire's vision of the conflict between God and the Jezebel-Babylon duumvirate betrays a certain underlying structure to the gendered spiritual warfare discourse that I am examining here. This is the conflation of absence and multiplicity in opposition to a unitary, present centre. That such a distinction is heavily gendered is something that calls for (a certain kind of) psychoanalytic critique. The authors' focus on Ahab's submissiveness and Jezebel's dominance as the quintessential figurations of improper gendered social relations evoke clear comparisons to heteronormative sexual relations, in which a 'passive' feminine receives an 'active' masculine, and in which woman is coded as 'lack' and historically comprehended as 'man inverted' (Balsam 2012: 177). The unacknowledged but underlying logic of the racialised jezebel, the colonial impetus and post-colonial terror of spiritual warfare, and indeed, the alignment of darkness and a certain physicality similarly beckon for a postcolonial/psychoanalytic examination, in which Freud's 'dark continent' of female sexuality meets that of the 10/40 Window into which the missionary logic of salvation must penetrate (see Khanna 2003).

Moreover perhaps, the way that Jezebel and Babylon's figurations as sexually and religiously plural are coded within the texts as absence, nothing, or void evokes a

clear, if perhaps crude, comparison to Luce Irigaray's *This Sex Which Is Not One*, in which she analyses woman's sexual organ(s) as encoded by a similar paradigm of conflated plurality and absence in an order centred on the 'noble phallic organ' (1985: 23, 24–33). The accuracy of this specific example or the desirability of psychoanalytic readings generally notwithstanding, Helene Tallon Russell has noted that Irigaray's analysis helps in unveiling a 'disturbing correspondence' between psychoanalytic formulations of woman as the privation of maleness and Augustine's definition of sin and evil as privation of good: 'Evil does not have ontological status in and of itself,' she notes, 'but only derivative status from the good it corrupts... Evil is the privation of good. Movement toward God or the One is good. Movement away from God or away from the One is sin.' This formulation of privation is mirrored in psychoanalytic figurations of woman: she is defined by her lack of the male organ, constituted by envy for it. She 'desires only to be desired'. She 'is defined... as a lack of the phallus, as a privation of the phallus, as a subject which is not one, as a privation of the One, as a privation of the good, as evil' (2009: 171–2). In this reading, Irigaray's multiplicity of the feminine corresponds to Augustine's conception of sin as 'the multiformity of the divided will' (*ibid.*: 172). Irrespective of the overall accuracy of Irigaray's reading of gendered Western cultural norms, it is true that Jezebel's multiplicity is figured as an absence, both sexually and spiritually: her many gods are no God at all and her proliferation of sexual practices are an absence of a 'true'—(hetero)normative—sexuality.

In the context of Jezebel-Babylonian cohabitation, the alignment sketched by Russell between psychoanalytic femininity and Augustinian evil carries some weight. 'Where is the Prince?' Jezebel asks, marking the lack of that guarantor of truth—the sovereign male—that is the condition of her possibility. That this discourse is both overtly gendered and covertly raced marks the site where a formerly-invisible given—the concept of the sovereign as white, male, heterosexual—is made visible and radically destabilised through that very exposure. Jezebel exposes the always-already dependent nature of sovereignty, tied to those processes of modern globalisation that bring to light the inherent instability of the bounded nation-state (here, the United States), which is always-already porous and perforated, reliant on the recognition of

its peers, and thereby unveils the prescriptive rather than descriptive nature of theopolitical sovereignty as such.

The Mistress of Kingdoms

The ways that Jezebel embodies the absence of authentic sovereignty and authentic masculinity/femininity ties into broader figurations of territoriality. As I discussed in depth in Chapter Two, the indivisibility of sovereignty is fundamentally a prescriptive illusion rather than a reality: political sovereignty as figured in the concept of the self-contained, self-regulating nation-state has always been compromised by mechanisms such as trade and migration (Baranger 2010; Elden 2009; Koskenniemi 2010; Krasner 1999, 2010). It has also always been compromised discursively by its relationship to its own limits—spatially in its literal or figurative borders and temporally in its emergence and differentiation from that which preceded it—and thus the dependent relationship of the centre on the periphery for its façade of cohesion. Sovereignty is always decided from the place of some demon.

One might be inclined to posit this demon here as Jezebel (or Babylon) but this is only part of the truth. While she does indeed operate as the self-consolidating other to the centre—foreign, polytheistic woman to native, monotheistic man—the specifics of her figuration compliment and complicate this simple designation. As I noted in the first section, spiritual warfare is highly territorial, attributing national and ideological spaces to kingdoms of light or of darkness depending on the socio-political dominance (or lack) of specific cultural, political and religious structures, physical and discursive. Within figurations of the Jezebel-Babylon alliance, such territoriality is a prominent attribute, and its underlying logic is made clearest in LeClaire's figuration of Babylon as 'Lady of the Kingdoms', a symbolic reference to the city drawn from Isaiah 47:5: 'Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; For you shall no longer be called, The Lady of Kingdoms.'¹² LeClaire (2013: 59, 64) informs us that this

¹² The word translated by LeClaire and the KJV as 'lady' is *gēberet*, translated by Gary Smith in *The New American Commentary* on Isaiah 40–66 as 'Honorable Queen' (2009: 303). It is translated as 'Queen' (NIV, ISV), 'Mistress' (ESV, ASV), or 'lady' (KJV, ERV), depending on Bible edition, and Goldingay and Payne note that elsewhere it is used generally to refer to a female head of household, often in opposition to *šiphāh* ('servant') (2006: 99). The verse is viewed as depicting God's

Lady of the Kingdoms is Babylon, religious running mate of Jezebel. Part of Jezebel's end time purpose is to seduce people to worship the Lady of the Kingdoms instead of the King of kings...Babylon is the worldwide religious, political and economic system personified in the book of Revelation as *Mystery Babylon*. I believe that Jezebel is a principality and *Mystery Babylon* is the world's system through which it works...Babylon's system woos people with its many benefits, such as a one-world religion that promises fewer wars (and rumors of wars) and prosperity. We see this edging into the Body of Christ today through universalism, New Age doctrine, humanism and a prosperity gospel. Babylon is full of idolatry and immorality because its systems were birthed through Jezebel.

There are several attributes operating in this description. Foremost among these is the juxtaposition of the 'Lady of the Kingdoms' to the 'King of kings.' Another is that Babylon is birthed through Jezebel, a spiritual daughter as well as systemic partner; yet within the discourse of spiritual warfare Jezebel cannot bear children, reproduce or even produce, and yet Babylon is figured as her progeny. Third is Babylon's figuration as a symbol of unity, of a 'one world religion' that promises prosperity and an end to war, and the manner in which several belief systems and practices ('universalism, New Age, humanism, and a prosperity gospel') are coded as reflecting this false unity.

These latter points relate to the duality of the first: the opposition between a 'Lady of the Kingdoms' and a 'King of kings' encodes the conflict between a female multiplicity/absence and a male unity/presence, for while God is the sovereign who is sovereign over other, lesser, sovereignties, Babylon is affiliated not in relation to kings but their territories. While one is a unity of difference founded on the presence of a centre, the other is based on the lack of that very centre. While Babylon is often figured as symbolic of an ungodly unity (Runions 2014) in even LeClaire's text it is made clear that unity is of God and that demonic forces like Babylon and Jezebel are aligned with division and differentiation. She writes that 'unity is the goal. Jezebel

punishment of Babylon's arrogance, condemning her to a future irrelevance in which her vassals no longer honour her (G.V. Smith 2009: 303). Goldingay and Payne note that it is 'suggestive that the states' under Babylon's control are referred to clearly as 'kingdoms' (*mamlākôt*) rather than merely 'ammîm' ('peoples, ethnic groups') or *gôyim* ('foreign nations'), implying that they might be 'sovereign states that controlled their own destinies... ruled by a king or queen of their own' but which had been reduced to the function of a *sîphāh* beneath a *gēberet* (2006: 99–100). It is, of course, notable that LeClaire utilises the translation 'lady' rather than 'Queen', a term that conveys a reduced sense of authority, although the fact she does not use 'Mistress' is surprising, given the negative modern connotations of the term.

opposes this by tossing people to and fro with its doctrines, trickery, craftiness and deceitful plotting' (2013: 139). Sampson corroborates this characterisation by declaring that 'God puts a high premium on unity and hates division', tying it to a narrative of ancient and essential antagonism between God and Satan: 'Starting with his rebellion, Lucifer has always striven to bring division' (2012: 97). Yet Babylon is also aligned with a 'one-world religion that promises fewer wars...and prosperity' (besides Christianity itself, presumably).

It would initially seem difficult to align this striving for the division of peoples, characteristic of the demonic, with global unification. However, this points toward one of spiritual warfare's primary fears, one brought to the fore by LeClaire's treatment of the story of the Tower of Babel (Gen, 11:1–9), which she sees as prototype of Babylon as the systemic partner of Jezebel. The final conflict is not unity against division but rather between one unity founded on an indivisible sovereign centre and another that reveals this centre as always-already illusory. LeClaire narrates Nimrod's act in building the tower as an act of rebellion against God, citing first-century Jewish historian, Josephus: '[Nimrod] said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach' (in LeClaire 2013: 66). In order to tie this tale of Babelian rebellion back into her broader Jezebel narrative, however, she proceeds to bring up Nimrod's wife, Semiramis, as the first embodiment of the Jezebel spirit, and informs her readers that Semiramis was the originator of immoral pagan practices and that all world religions ultimately stem from the cult she founded: 'Babylon is called the Mother of Harlots, which means she births other religions' (2013: 66). LeClaire constructs an aetiology of all immorality and idolatry and binds it all into the dual personalities of Jezebel and Babylon: 'Jezebel...wants the whole world to worship its gods. This spirit wants everyone to worship the harlot Babylon, which is a counterfeit of the Bride of Christ' (*ibid.*:70).¹³

¹³ There is an undercurrent of quasi-incestuous lesbianism that permeates this discussion, one that relates directly to the conflation of sexual and spiritual deviancy, but which is never acknowledged or discussed by LeClaire. While some authors (for example, Derry 2007: 24) explicitly discuss Jezebel or Babylon as the Bride of Satan, this is absent in LeClaire's text. Indeed, the way in which she figures Babylon as the worldly system through which Jezebel works, much as God operates through the earthly institution that is his Bride, the Church, a reading of Babylon as the Bride of Jezebel would naturally follow.

Absence the Body

LeClaire conveniently omits God's punishment for the construction of the tower: the division of humanity into many languages by God on account of what they might accomplish united (Genesis 11:9). This omission illustrates far more than her narrative: for LeClaire, but also for Schott, Sampson, Frangipane, and others, it has never been about a generalised unity but of a specific kind of unity—one that restores the structure of the Church, the Bride of Christ, over that of the counterfeit Bride, Babylon, and of Jezebel who stands beside her in collusion and cohabitation. While the authors may attempt, even admirably, to discuss abusive control and manipulation by individuals in positions of power, the language they deploy to discuss this 'witchcraft' and the way they weave their narratives of abuse throughout their diatribes on homosexuality and the modern media betrays their core concern: maintenance of telic order, a divinely-ordained status quo in which the unity of the impermeable centre is maintained at all costs. Sampson almost makes this explicit in writing on the placement of individuals within the Church, although his language clothes it in the rhetoric of divine ordination:

All believers have a grace, an anointing, to operate in the segment of the Body [of Christ] to which they are called. It is a place for them where flowing in the Holy Spirit will produce life and fruit for the Kingdom. When we desire to be something other than what God has called us to be, however, we enter into pride and selfishness (2012: 103).

The message is clear: God has given us all a place. To be in that station augments the unity of the Kingdom, but to attempt to strive for another place places one in the hands of the Lady of Kingdoms, and leads to the disruption of the Kingdom, of authentic sovereignty, unity and order: of—to quote the US Pledge of Allegiance—'one Nation under God.'

This strategy of disruption is connected discursively to gender and sexuality, in which disruption of heteronormativity ripples through the greater system of telic order. As such, much of the focus of the authors circles around the image of the body: this body is at once the physical body of the (un)believer and the Body of the Church. It is also the social body, both in the sense of the collective body of a community and the individual body within that community. The integrity of the b/Body and the integrity between bodies here constitute the fulcrum of theopolitical contestation.

While much of this is linked to ideas of the human as *imago Dei*: as humanity was made in God's image, defilement of the human body is seen as an affront to the deity whose form it bears. As noted earlier, however, it is also linked to a theologic of property stemming from the authors' readings of I Corinthians, in which God is constructed as having ownership of a person's body due to the price paid on the Cross (LeClaire 2013: 30; Schott 2013: 102).¹⁴ Bodily autonomy is figured here as idolatry, a worshipping of the human and of human artifice rather than the Creator. Earlier, I noted that given the raced nature of 'the jezebel' in the US, this particular logic carries in it an insidious undercurrent of African-American slavery, one that is difficult to ignore given the manner in which Jezebel and Babylon symbolise the spread of sexual, racial, and religious difference.

In accordance with the authors' fixation on abortion and concepts of endurance and continuity, figurations of this difference often shift beyond a logic of ownership or property and tie themselves to the logic of (re)production I touched on above. Schott's objection to homosexuality was framed according to the argument that it disrupts and violates God's commandment that men and women reproduce (2013: 105). He extends this lack of sexual reproduction to a lack of cultural production as such: 'Homosexuals cannot produce,' he writes, 'they cannot reproduce, and they cannot bear fruit' (*ibid.*: 106). The ability to conceive children is here transferred to the generalised capacity to create, the absence of which tied to Queen Jezebel's own childless state, and to the nature of the demonic noted in relation to discourses of demonological witchcraft: demons cannot create. A body that has been corrupted by Jezebel forfeits its capacity for creation—specifically, the capacity for the creation of an authentic, legitimate and (thus) enduring system. It forfeits, in the minds of the authors, its right to the future: 'The spirit of Jezebel brings a spirit of death to natural families and spiritual families. It destroys the fruit of churches. It aborts the relationship between pastors and their spiritual children and destroys the future of churches and the legacy that God intends for His people' (*ibid.*: 93).

¹⁴ 'Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Don't you realise that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honour God with your body' (I Cor. 6:18–20).

The elision from the ‘natural’ to the ‘spiritual’ family here creates a continuity between a male-headed heterosexual family unit (construed as the symbol and vessel of cultural continuity as such) and the concept of the Church as a similar unit, headed by God as the spiritual archetype of this heteronormative structure, just as the integrity of the human body becomes metonym for the Body of Christ that is the Church. This Body of Christ is also the Bride of Christ, placed in stark juxtaposition with the counterfeit bride of Babylon (LeClaire 2013: 70). This concept of the double-body—body/Body—to refer to the physical flesh that is a temple to the Holy Spirit and the institution via which salvation is proffered augments the authors’ narrative correlation between idolatry and sexual sins (LeClaire 2013: 29–30, 102, 133; Sampson 2012: 45–6, 96–8, 190; Schott 2013: 51–60, 101–12). Sampson (2012: 107) stresses the importance of maintaining the proper place of this double-body, and later expands on this, writing on those in thrall to Jezebel that

People with a Jezebel spirit divide a church body...Such people have no heart to bring unity or healing and no heart to honor a leader’s position or authority. Those with such a spirit have a “religious” ambition to seek a place God has not granted them. That is dangerous territory.

LeClaire clarifies the consequences of entering this territory: ‘When one part of the Body suffers, every part suffers’ (2013: 133). Bodily integrity is compromised and the b/Body becomes sick. Such integrity is, expectedly, bound to the abstinence from ‘sexual sins’:

This spiritual cancer called sexual immortality is metastasizing across the many parts of the Body today...Paul warned the church at Corinth—and the Church at large—not to keep company with sexually immoral people...He exhorted us that the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord...He warned us to flee sexual immorality, which is a sin against one’s own body...And Jude reminds us of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose inhabitants gave themselves over to sexual immorality and will suffer the vengeance of eternal fire (*ibid.*: 30).

The purity of the human body and of the family body become metonyms for the purity of the Church and the unity of the Kingdom; the unity of an integral self which is set against the division and counterfeit unity embodied by the incursion of the foreign pagan woman, Jezebel, and her partner Babylon. Sexual sins—including not only the homosexuality and pre-marital intercourse that represent the most common targets, but also body piercing and other practices—corrupt the body: the partaking of one’s body in such sexual sins causes, in the words of Schott, ‘a rift in their

relationship with God' (2013: 105), with consequences both lethal and damnatory. It transforms the temple to the Holy Spirit into an idolatrous temple to the self. Idolatry of the body leads to idolatry in the Body. The wages of this sin is the eternal fire that swallowed Sodom and Gomorrah.

Her Counterfeit Bride

There are, however, complications to this tale of unity and division, corruption and judgement. I have noted above that the authors' attempts to portray this conflict as one of unity against division belie a fear of an alter-unity, one external to the Body of Christ: the core concern is not of the maintenance of unity but of the maintenance of a specific kind of unity in which everyone stays in the places assigned to them and the monological status quo endures. The same is true here: it is not just about the integrity of the Body but the placing of that body into its proper cosmological position: beneath the oversight of the patriarchal authority of God, of Scripture, and of the legitimate authority of the god-graced ruler: a patriarchal, heteronormative, telic order of being. An orthotaxy.

LeClaire's characterisation of Babylon as the systemic partner through whom Jezebel works augments and subverts this ideology: it portrays the very model of alter-unity that the authors' oppose. Babylon is Lady of Kingdoms, a figure that in LeClaire's text deserts its original, biblical context and becomes transfigured into an image of an unstable and counterfeit unity based on a foundation of worldliness and multiplicity: a 'unity' that is not monological but pluralistic. Babylon is not a Queen of a Kingdom, which is to say a singular dominion, but neither is she a monarch of monarchs like God, King of Kings—a higher authority above and beyond mortal authorities. She is *gēberet mamlākôt*, mistress of kingdoms, unifier of a plethora of disparate territories that remain forever differentiated and divided, disruptions in a theopolitical monologic of telic sovereign order. Babylon, for LeClaire, is the world system; the Satanic—which is to say oppositional, adversarial, other—system birthed by the 'spirit of the world'. Perhaps accordingly, she is not a Queen of Kings, the authentic figures of sovereign unity, but of the bounded, worldly territories which that sovereignty is meant to rule but which here have been radically displaced by the subversive strategies of Babylon and Jezebel.

Like the idolatry that is one of Jezebel's core aspects, this Babelian plurality is figured as absence. For the authors concerned, an absence of singular sovereign authority, a King of kings, is transfigured into a generalised absence that becomes the condition of reality as such. As Jezebel is a principality whose existence marks the absent prince, the Lady of Kingdoms unites disparate alterities without fully hierarchising differences and subsuming them fully under a singular monarch: there is hierarchy here, yes, but it is unstable, shifting, multiple. Yet for LeClaire, Schott and others, absolute unity—of the body, the family, the Church—is constructed as the sole possible foundation for cultural continuity, and therefore from the fluidity of her gender to the subversiveness of her witchcraft Jezebel's multiplicity is coded as an emptiness. This multiplicity-as-absence belies the very logic by which Jezebel is excluded: she unsettles sovereign indivisibility by exposing it to be the very absence that it projects.

As LeClaire holds, Babylon is the 'worldwide religious, political and economic system' through which Jezebel works (2013: 63). Her counterfeit Bride. Runions notes that this figuration of Babylon, which is heavily reliant on the account of Josephus that LeClaire draws from, relates directly to the seeming loss of US sovereignty and control in the global economic systems that it itself helped birth with the unipolar moment. Within this framework of instability, the narrative of the Tower of Babel as birthplace and blueprint of the Babylon system becomes a symbol of the need for the reassertion of a patriarchal, divine authority:

[T]he story of the Tower of Babel is used in the early twenty-first century in ways that continue to bear the marks of Josephus' retelling...the addition of Nimrod (racialised over time), the fear of collectivity and equality as tyrannical and self-indulgent, the reaffirmation of social hierarchy passed down through families, and the insistence of the theocratic higher power of God in ordering social relations and the structures of governance. These arguments are put to work in a time when subjectivity and politics are shaped by access to global markets no longer controlled by sovereign centers within nation-states...faith in God hides the fact that the United States is no longer a secure locus of power (2014: 83–4).

This retelling of Babel 'attempts to grasp after sovereignty, even as it crumbles away' (*ibid.*: 85). However, as I discuss in Chapters Two and Three, the indivisibility of sovereignty is theopolitically prescriptive more than it has ever been purely descriptive. The processes of globalisation, often seen as undermining the sovereignty

of nation-states through transnational networks of cultural and economic flow, just exacerbate an ever-present but occluded instability in sovereignty's structure: the illusory nature of its indivisibility.

Globalisation highlights the porosity of borders and makes this illusion increasingly untenable. The discourses of spiritual warfare examined here, birthed in the United States but with global theo-colonial aspirations, are themselves products of the very Babelian processes they try to combat, tied to the imbrication of Pentecostal, charismatic and evangelical dualisms in the mechanisms of global capitalism and the processes of their cultural localisation (S. Coleman 2000; Freeman 2012; Hasu 2012). The spatial dualism that sustains spiritual warfare as a global paradigm, in which the world is divided into opposing realms of God and Devil, Light and Darkness, is itself always-already fractured and disparate, 'basically universal' yet 'simultaneously particular in that each society...produces its own form of it' (Deininger 2013: 58). Its two realms are fluid and cross-contaminating—transnational networks of spiritual flow that mean that as soon as the Kingdom tries to export its truth it finds its borders blurred, penetrated by the demonic other—by Jezebel, by Babylon, and, in the words of LeClaire, 'God knows what other devils from various other parts of the world' (2013: 164).

Mestlet, Mestlet

'Where is the Prince?' Jezebel asks. Her figuration and her name gesture towards the sovereign's founding illusion. The question is rhetorical. The Prince—whole, solitary, enduring—was always-already absent. There was only ever difference and messy multiplicity, a religious, racial, sexual plurality which coalesced itself into ever-unstable hierarchies of being(s). This is the latent possibility seen by those authors whose texts I have analysed here. It is troubling, disrupting assurances of eventual, preordained, and apocalyptic victory. As Frangipane wrote in 1989, in a sentiment found throughout other texts: 'The lie of the enemy appears most powerfully when men believe that this world, as it is, is the only world we can live in. The truth is, of course, that God is establishing His kingdom and, ultimately, every other reality will submit to and be ruled by that kingdom!' (2006: 110). But as Sampson says, letting uncharacteristic concern infiltrate his cautionary-yet-triumphant tale: 'Something that

has always troubled me, however, is the way that those who yield to a Jezebel spirit seem to get away with it in the here and now. I have never understood that, yet I do believe that God in His mercy gives a person time to repent' (2012: 39). Sampson finds it strange that the Sovereign allows this rival system to endure. Why does the Sovereign tolerate rebellion? It must be a part of his plan. After all, he owns everyone. The belief that one might own oneself, might direct one's own destiny, is just a false idol, a temporary legal access that will be rescinded. It is ownership of a darkness without light, without a God who is light: an ownership of absence and an absence of ownership.

The lights go out.

Mestlet, Mestlet.

CHAPTER SIX

(P)Redestinations

(Trans)Humanism and the Origins of Emergence

The imago Dei is an image that creates an event of sudden or gradual emergence or revelation. One cannot plan in advance what will show itself.

— Claudia Welz (2011: 88)

‘[N]ever forget when you hear people boast of our progress in enlightenment,’ Charles Baudelaire has a preacher exclaim in his 1869 short story ‘The Generous Gambler’, ‘that one of the devil’s best ruses is to persuade you that he does not exist!’ (1970: 61). Drawing on the cultural legacy of Satan as seductive, corruptive deceiver, Baudelaire’s preacher highlights that within a paradigm of good and evil the latter flourishes precisely through relative invisibility, and cautions against ‘naively labelling a progressive world to be free of (and over) evil’ (Heit 2011: 4).

There is a manner in which the history of the post-Enlightenment West has been a history of the Devil’s gradual disappearance. Seen as mostly indefensible by mainstream theologies bearing the brunt of Enlightenment critique, demonology was ‘conclusively discredited’ (Lincoln 2009: 45) and faded from mainstream religious praxis to find niches on the religious fringe in apocalyptic beliefs and occulture, and in literature and popular culture. Christopher Partridge noted in 2004 that even if ‘the concept of a unifying, personified source of evil still exists in Western Christian theology,’ ideas of ‘swarming hordes of demons’ had generally been abandoned (2004: 171). By early 2015, the Anglican Church had agreed to remove references to Satan from its baptismal rite in favour of less-personified references to ‘sin’ and

‘evil’. The Bishop of Truro, Timothy Thornton, defended the decision by stating that ‘references to the devil were likely to be misunderstood in today’s culture’: they were ‘unhelpful’, making services ‘complex and inaccessible’.¹ Any personification had ceased to be desirable.

For the writers whose works I analyse below, as above, Satan’s vanishing act from Western theology and post-Enlightenment secular society indicates something quite different: that the projects of secular modernity are themselves fundamentally demonic. This demonisation of modernity is touched on in Baudelaire’s tale. As the Devil informs its narrator over drinks and cigars, he ‘did not think it beneath him to inspire the pen, the speech, and the conscience of pedagogues, and that he almost invariably attended in person, although invisible, all academic assemblies’ (1970: 62). Indeed, ‘no one was more interested in the suppression of *superstition* than himself’ (*ibid.*: 61). As I have already discussed, alignments of Satan with modernity and emancipatory politics was a feature of Romantic and symbolic Satanisms. Giosuè Carducci coded him as the avenging force of reason in *A Satana*, while Baudelaire’s *Litanies de Satan* ends with a prayer in which the branches of the Tree of Knowledge spread over Satan’s brow like a new Temple. Anarchist thinker Mikhail Bakunin encapsulated this symbolic Satan in *God and the State*, by describing him as ‘the first freethinker and the emancipator of worlds. He makes man ashamed of his bestial ignorance and obedience; he emancipates him, stamps upon his brow the seal of liberty and humanity, in urging him to disobey and eat of the fruit of knowledge’ (1970: 10).

I cite these statements to gesture to a certain discursive formation that the milieu I examine below identifies and draws upon. This formation is bound to the complex relation between the secular and the religious in secular modernity. As sociologist of religion José Casanova has noted, the secular and the religious are mutually constituted. While ‘the secular’ is increasingly seen in the West as reality *tout court* to which religion is superstructural and superfluous, the idea of the secular originates in Christian theology—as part of a binary opposition that divides the world

¹ ‘Sin but no devil: Church of England debates its baptismal liturgy’ *Church Today*, 12/02/2015, at <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/no.sin.no.devil.church.of.england.debates.its.baptismal.liturgy/48013.htm> [accessed 08/03/2015].

into sacred and profane realms (2011). To summarise Charles Taylor, the West is secular because, rather than in spite, of its religious heritage (2007: 791–2). Ideas of secularisation (related, but not identical, to ‘the secular’ and ‘secularism’), in which humanity is constructed as shedding the marks of religiosity, moving from belief to unbelief and from ‘irrational or metaphysical religion’ to scientific rationality, thus takes part in a culturally-specific movement of ideological reversal. In the words of Talal Asad: ‘[whilst] “the secular” was a part of theological discourse...[later] “the religious” is constituted by secular political and scientific discourses, so that “religion” itself as a historical category and as a universal globalized concept emerges as a construction of Western secular modernity’ (2003: 192).

The impact of this genealogy on Western modernity is a matter of debate. For Jean-Luc Nancy, this relation points to the question of how ‘the West may be Christian in its depths’ (2008: 34), while Asad argues that while Christian mythological narratives like that of redemption may have galvanised and assisted the formation of social projects of secular modernity, it does not necessarily follow that these projects are ‘essentially Christian’. Indeed, for Asad, these projects embody a distinctive politics (democratic, anticlerical), a different morality focused mainly on the sacredness of the individual conscience and rights, and a regard for suffering as something ‘subjective and accidental’—to be medically treated, as corrective punishment or as ‘the unfinished business of universal empowerment’ (2003: 61–2). Collectively, these features mean that the agent of worldly redemption must also be worldly, and discourses are therefore often focused on the individual as both redeemer and the darkness in need of redemption.

The genealogical relationship between secularism and Christianity and the processes by which the former-other of a theological binary reverses that binary and ultimately subsumes its parent as simply an attribute of itself, are foundational to the narratives woven by the writers whose texts I examine. These writers concentrate on filtering what they name as the ideologies of secular humanism, and transhumanism specifically, through evangelical demonology.² By doing so, they recall the contrast

² I use the term ‘transhuman’ here rather than the sometimes-preferred ‘posthuman’, although these terms are fairly interchangeable, because it is the term commonly employed in both the scholarship and by the apocalyptic writers. Additionally, in the view of Michael Burdett, ‘the term transhumanism better describes its relation to humanity. “Post” tends to allude to something just after the human and

of ‘sensuous and corrupt with ideal and pure’ that has historically been mapped onto distinctions between secular time and eternity, in which the secular became associated more with the fallen than the merely created (Calhoun 2012: 342). In their narratives, the secularisation of Western society becomes a process of the diabolisation of both humanity and (through them) all creation. The Enlightenment emancipatory project of the redemption of this-worldly beings by this-worldly forces—central to transhuman soteriologies—are herein opposed to a more ‘traditional’ evangelical apocalypticism that tries to (re)assert an original (pure) model of humanity as made in God’s image and achieving perfection by following God’s will; that is, by adherence to a structure of reality constructed as orthotaxic.

I explore these narratives over three sections. The first lays out features of transhumanism as resting both inside and outside a broader genealogy of the Christian apocalyptic appropriation of technology and proceeds to define the milieu of the evangelical writers who oppose it. The second then analyses a dominant scenario narrated by texts produced in this milieu, which invokes the prophetic structure of apocalyptic time in order to transpose the modern threat of transhumanist philosophy back into the biblical narrative of the ‘days of Noah’ and integrate it into a pre-existing eschatological framework. In the third section, I explore transhumanism’s own roots in theological ideas of dominion and the instauration of prelapsarian perfection, circling around the recurrent image of the *imago Dei* as guarantor of human (self-)sovereignty, and reveal how transhumanist soteriologies inherit and/or usurp this divine semblance. Transhumanism is ultimately revealed as threatening to the milieu I analyse because it resembles—as semblance, as spectre—the Christianity it disavows.

doesn’t necessarily provide orientation as to how it relates to the human except that it has moved on from it...[Transhumanism] provides more content as to how this movement relates to the human: It is transcending it’ (2015: 3–4). Contra Burdett’s point, ‘posthuman’ might usefully draw on other complex and multifaceted figurations of the prefix as in postmodernism, postcolonialism, and postsecularism, drawing attention to the simultaneous distancing from and reliance on ideas of ‘the human’.

TECHNOLOGIES OF THE END

The Christian eschatological figuration of technology has taken multiple forms, oscillating between hope and despair in accordance with the cultural permutations of the period. Today, mass communication methods like the Internet are often used to promulgate apocalyptic and other fringe religiosities to a global audience, as in the ‘media ministries’ of Schott and LeClaire examined above (see also Landes 2011: 391–466; Wojcik 1997: 148–208), but innovations have often been figured beyond simply enabling proselytisation. In 1855, the railroad and the telegraph were seen as preparatory steps for building a New Zion via their unificatory potential (Boyer 1992: 228). Later, in the 1930s, eschatological interpreters found air travel and television in the pages of scripture, with the ‘cloud’ of Ezekiel 38:16 connoting an aerial bombing, parachutes, and (in the 50s) ICBMs, meanwhile television offered a convenient explanation as to how Christ’s second advent might be watched by the whole world (*ibid.*: 106–7).

During the Cold War, the spectre of the bomb haunted the era’s eschatologies (Boyer 1992: 115–51; O’Leary 1994: 134–71; 2000: 392–426; Wojcik 1997: 37–51). Its influence was broad and sweeping, as Daniel Wojcik (1997: 33) relates:

From the beginning of the atomic age prophecy believers searched the Bible for possible allusions to nuclear conflagration and found persuasive evidence for the inevitability of nuclear apocalypse. References to fiery destruction in the Book of Revelation, for example, suggested atomic warfare—an allusion to ‘hail and fire mixed with blood’ which burns a third of the land and trees and ‘all green grass’ sounded like nuclear war (Rev. 8:7); an allusion to scorching heat and malignant sores might describe the aftermath of atomic radiation (Rev. 16:2–8)...Convinced that nuclear weapons were the means by which ancient prophecies of ‘fire and brimstone’ raining down from the heavens would be realized, prophecy believers from various traditions embraced the development of nuclear weapons as a portent indicating that humanity had accelerated its progression toward an apocalypse that was inevitable.

Viewed with both hope and dread by religious apocalypticists, the nuclear bomb fell somewhat out of fashion as geopolitical forces brought the Cold War to a close. The apocalyptic ecstasies witnessed in Hal Lindsey’s *Late, Great Planet Earth* gave way to more cautionary messages, like Pat Robertson’s 1985 remarks that nuclear war was no longer expected as part of the divine plan: ‘God doesn’t want to incinerate the

world’, he stated, and Armageddon was an act of God that had ‘nothing to do with human abilities whatsoever’ (in Boyer 1992: 138).

The representations of technologies I deal with here are similar yet markedly different to the ones listed here. These emerging ‘transhuman’ technologies—bioengineering, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, and others—fundamentally alter the parameters of technologically-induced apocalypse by shifting the locus of eschatological transformation from the world to humanity itself. While the bomb was seen as (maybe) within God’s plan for earthly destruction and recreation, these transhuman technologies present the potential for a new eschatology often, if not always, construed as antithetical to God’s own. The exegetical methods utilised by the authors examined below are the same, yet while they attempt to integrate this new eschatology into their own, this (trans)humanist alter-apocalypse threatens to reshape the human into something that might even exceed the predestinations of scripture. What is discursively constructed as at stake is the *imago Dei* itself as the ground of human authenticity, sovereignty, and perfectibility, and of the telic order of creation.

Authentic Fakery

Broadly, ‘transhumanism’ refers to a (group of) philosophical paradigm(s) advocating the use of technology for the fundamental alteration of the human condition. As Braden Allenby and Daniel Sarewitz argue, in many ways transhumanism can be seen as simply the latest manifestation of the ‘technological optimism’ prevalent in the West that emerged from the Enlightenment advocacy of reason for human betterment (2011: 7). Transhumanism is comprehensive in its goals, advocating beyond the use of technology for health and longevity to encompass the enhancement of intelligence, creativity and emotional capabilities, the conscious manipulation of the genetic attributes of one’s offspring and the evolution of the human (and other) species, and the cybernetic networking of multiple minds, up to and including the transcendence of bodily existence itself (*ibid.*: 8).

There is a highly religious flavour to many of these goals, which has been remarked on. Celia Deane-Drummond (2011), Michael Burdett (2011, 2015), Hava Tirosh-Samuelson (2015), and Joseph Wolyniak (2015) note how transhumanism rests on theological foundations. Brent Waters terms it ‘a late modern religious

response to the finite and mortal constraints of human existence’ (2011: 164), while Allenby and Sarewitz remark that one need not analyse its language too deeply ‘to recognize an agenda for human betterment that in other contexts marks the domain of faith and spiritual practice...Immortality, perfectibility, dominion, transcendence’ (2011: 17–18). Ronald Cole-Turner draws explicit parallels between the language of technological enhancement and the theological notion of glorification by and through God (2011a: 5), while Tirosh-Samuelson (2015: 165) clarifies the apocalyptic logic underlying much transhuman quasi-religiosity when she writes that the

techno-scientific *eschaton* imbues human-made technology with salvific value: the Kingdom of God will be realised on earth through technology, thereby making salvation both imminent and immanent. In the trans/posthumanist vision, to achieve what humans have always wanted—immortality—humans must take control of evolution, directing it toward the eschatological, posthuman end.

Responding to this religious impulse identified in transhumanism, manifested most clearly in its yearning for transcendence, Robert Geraci (2012: 586) has adopted the term ‘authentic fake’ from the work of David Chidester: ‘Authentic fakes are fraudulent practices that do real religious work’, he relates,

they provide access to transcendence, promote the creation and maintenance of communities, establish morality, and guide human activity...These ‘frauds’ are not lies or scams; they are dishonest only in that they are not expected...to be sacred, yet accomplish the same ends.

Regardless of broader utility, hinging on what might be considered an essentialist and reductive definition of what is and is not ‘religion,’ the paradox of the ‘authentic fake’ is useful for analysing transhumanism in comparison with and contrast to a competing system of apocalyptic eschatology that deems it illegitimate yet is constantly haunted by the possibility of its authenticity. For those analysed below, transhumanism’s potential legitimacy *as* artifice or counterfeit of ‘true religion’ underlies their apocalyptic dread, problematising their teleological narratives.

As earlier technological innovations were met with a range of hope and despair, religious responses to transhumanism have been similarly varied. As James Hughes describes, in the contemporary era believers from many religious traditions ‘selectively [appropriate] transhumanist ideas and technologies as fulfilling more traditional soteriological goals and eschatological visions’ (2014: xiii). While at times such appropriations ‘are completely hostile, as when conspiracy-minded apocalyptic

groups add transhumanists to their lists of Satan's minions in their End-Times scenarios,' for many there are transhumanist aspirations, like radical longevity or cognitive enhancement, which are 'theologically unobjectionable.' However, a line is still often drawn at 'uploading minds, or interference in "natural" reproduction, or inheritable genetic enhancement' (*ibid.*: xiii–xiv). Critical engagements outside open antagonism cover a range of topics and hinge on underlying issues of justice as often as those of nature; Cole-Turner (2011b: 194) and Peters (2011: 70–1), for example, note how transhumanist desires are enmeshed in systems of capitalist inequality and the global division of labour.

It is on the side of the 'completely hostile' that the texts I analyse fall. Such responses have often been excluded from scholarly discussions, perhaps for good reason. There is a difference between religious critics of transhumanism like Brent Waters and propheticians like Noah Hutchings. The former analyses transhumanism and Christianity as 'contending salvific religions', offering similar but oppositional soteriologies, in which 'both agree that death is the final enemy [but] transhumanists conquer this foe by achieving the immortality of endless time, whereas Christians are resurrected into eternity, where there is no time' (Waters 2011: 164). The latter writes that 'the devil was behind some wicked transhuman business in Noah's day and he has never changed his lie or evil ways since. He is behind the transhuman science in my day [too]' (Hutchings 2011: 251). However, on a substantive as opposed to rhetorical or tonal level, these criticisms are not especially disparate; more vociferous opposition like that of Hutchings in a sense just magnifies and clarifies the ideological gulf identified by scholars like Waters. It sheds light on a dynamic between religious and secular time, a dynamic closely bound to ideas of divine power and human autonomy.

Theologically framed, the secular is the temporal space of fallen creation. The *saeculum*—that 'world of men and time', of 'time as the vehicle of sin and tragedy as well as the medium of redemption' (Markus 1988: xxii, 10)—finds its apocalyptic conclusion in Christ's Second Advent (Schiffman 2011: 109). Drawing on Waters' description of transhumanism as attempting to conquer death by making life extend indefinitely, it is possible to code transhuman apocalypticisms as an infinitisation of the *saeculum* in opposition to its eschatological erasure in eternity. As a becoming-

transcendent of fallen time, transhuman eschatologies readily lend themselves to incorporation in more ‘traditional’ apocalypticisms as a ‘doctrine of demons’ (I Tim. 4:1), in which they become reconfigured as one form of an anthropo-demonic project of wresting control of the world and time from the hand of the divine sovereign—a project which the proponent of demonological transhumanism Carl Teichrib labels the ‘Religion of Man’ (2011: 299). This religion is opposed to ‘true’ religion, venerating artifice over authenticity. However, in transhumanism artifice *as* artifice is coded as containing salvific potentiality, offering a fully immanent soteriology: an authentic fake whose (im)possible authenticity destabilises their constructions of orthotaxy.

Transhumanism and its Demon(ologist)s

Figurations of demonological transhumanism are not monolithic. Neither are they the products of a specific movement, an organisation or set of organisations operating under certain fixed principles. Rather, they are produced by a milieu of networked individuals connected via the Internet and radio talkshows, shared publications, and other media, who self-identify as conservative Christians and are united mainly by an identification of transhumanism as demonically-influenced and (therefore) ancient. They are broadly part of the same spiritual warfare discourse I examined in the preceding chapter, drawing on a similar discourse of warfare imagery, territoriality, and the concept of ideological and territorial strongholds that must be breached for the good of the world. While the authors I examined there focused on ‘Jezebel’ and cultural attitudes to gender roles and sexualities, those here focus their attentions on (trans)humanism and emerging technologies. One of the milieu’s most outspoken and prolific members, Thomas Horn, describes the technologies which concern him and the other authors in the milieu as synthetic biology, patenting of new lifeforms, human cloning, redefinition of humans and human rights, nanotechnology and cybernetics, transhuman eugenics, and germ-line engineering. He then adds but does not describe ‘immortalism, postgenderism, cryonics, designer babies, neurohacking, and mind-uploading’ (2011a: 11–20).

In some ways the milieu could be identified more broadly as anti-scientific or anti-humanist, seeing a demonic hand in the explosive advance of science in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Indeed, Thomas and his wife Nita Horn

posit a continuity of technologies from ‘the creation of the ouija board...to online pornography’ as phases in the machinations of a demonic spirit (2010: x). As with the transformation of Queen Jezebel into a demonic principality or the need to narrate Islam as one half of an eternal clash of civilisations, the positing of transhumanism as the culmination of an age-old process of demonic artifice is key to this paradigm. Despite similarities in mission, however, the milieu is eclectic and varied in membership. It includes, among many others, Chuck Missler, an evangelical preacher whose prophecy interpretations draw heavily on ufology and New Age ideas (2004, 2011; Missler and Eastman 1997), Gary Stearman, co-ordinator and host of *Prophecy in the News* and *Skywatch TV*, internet-based networks that amalgamate the tracts of other individuals in the milieu and offer them a ‘public’ platform, the aforementioned Noah Hutchings, who writes on the historicity of Atlantis and prophetic importance of the Giza pyramids (2010; 2011; Hutchings, Glaze and Spargimino 2011), and Douglas Woodward, a former corporate executive who writes on the end-times role of the United States (2011; 2013; 2014).³

Within this milieu, the works of Thomas Horn come to the fore through his capacity for assimilating the milieu’s technologically oriented fears into something resembling coherency and systematicity. CEO of Defender, a conservative Christian publishing group through which many of the milieu’s works are put out, Horn is one of the milieu’s most prominent members. It would, however, be a misnomer to call him its leader; the milieu is radically decentralised, coalescing around confluences of evangelical apocalypticism, New Age mysticism, ufology, and general conspiracist ideas of New World Order, and lacks a formal hierarchy. He has, however, styled himself ‘one of the most (if not *the* most) publically-recognized Christian critics of transhumanism with a belief in prophecy’ (2011a: 3). Hyperbole aside, he is at least known beyond the milieu. In 2006, sociologist and bioethicist James Hughes interviewed him on his *Changesurfer Radio*, and Horn was ‘invited’ by Calvin

³ Others include: Sharon Gilbert, co-host of Christian internet podcast *View from the Bunker*, is primarily concerned with pandemics, including the recent Ebola scare as a sign of the Fourth Horseman of the Apocalypse (2014). Carl Teichrib, the editor of *Forcing Change*, a monthly online journal that deals with ‘challenges to our worldview’, mainly in the form of conservative Christian criticisms of climate science and aspirations for one world government. Douglas Hamp author of several books, including *Corrupting the Image* (2011), which aligns with the Horns’ notion of genetic engineering being used to disrupt God’s image in humanity, and *The First Six Days* (2008), which critiques attempts to synthesise the Genesis narrative with modern theories of evolution.

Mercer to submit a paper to the Transhumanism and Religion Consultation for the 2011 AAR Conference (the paper was not accepted).⁴ Within the milieu itself Horn's presence looms large. He was discussed in over a dozen articles on conservative conspiracist hub site World Net Daily between 2008 and 2013, and all of his works are sold in its store. Horn has also been interviewed on Christian and conspiracist radio and television talk shows like *The 700 Club*, *The Harvest Show*, *Coast to Coast AM*, and Stearman's *Prophecy in the News*. I have chosen to focus on Horn not only due to his prominence in the milieu but also the volume of his output and its general thematic coherence.

While all Horn's works occupy the evangelical discourse of Third Wave spiritual warfare, they have appeared mainly in two interwoven trajectories, dealing with America and transhumanism, respectively. The first is found in *Spiritual Warfare* (1998), *Apollyon Rising 2012* (2009), its updated re-release *Zenith 2016* (2013), and the edited collection *Blood on the Altar* (2014b). The second begins, arguably, in *Gods That Walk Among Us* (Horn and Jones 1999), and comes to the fore with the (fictional) *Ahriman Gate* (Horn and Horn 2005) and the later (non-fictional) *Nephilim Stargates* (2007), *Forbidden Gates* (Horn and Horn 2010), and the edited *Pandemonium's Engine* (2011b).⁵ It would be a mistake to truly separate these paths, and the ways they relate to one another, as well as how his early works figure into later ones, is interesting to chart. While in his introduction to Terry Cook's *Beast Tech* (T.L. Cook and Horn 2013) Horn charts his concern over end-times technological fears back to 1990, Horn's *Spiritual Warfare* is as original as its title—a typical work of nineties spiritual warfare focusing, like the works of Frangipane (1991) or Jackson (2002), on pornography, homosexuality, and abortion, with no

⁴ This is as reported by Horn (2011a: 3). It is ambiguous exactly what Horn considers an invitation, but since Mercer sent the Call for Papers for the Consultation it is possible that Horn simply received it due to being on a transhumanism and religion mailing list. It is notable that while in the 2011 text he notes that he has not heard back regarding the acceptance and rejection of the paper, he reproduces the paper wholesale—including this note—on his website in 2012, months after the AAR ('Earth's Earliest Ages' at <http://www.raidersnewsupdate.com/pember4.htm>).

⁵ Two other works co-authored with Cris Putnam, *Petrus Romanus: The Final Pope is Here* (2012), and *Exo-Vaticana* (2013), rest between and outside these poles, adding to Horn's narrative in a different fashion by focusing on an anti-Catholic rather than anti-humanist narrative, while its overarching tale of extra-dimensional demonic beings is similar.

technoscientific emphasis.⁶ His 1999 book with Donald Jones targets New Age and neo-Pagan spiritualities and attempts to read pagan mythologies through Christian demonology. While both impact Horn's later oeuvre, his focus on technology truly emerges in *Ahriman*, the scenario of which entails the use of emerging technologies to resurrect the *nephilim*, half-human, half-fallen angel beings taken from Genesis 6 and I Enoch. This account was subsequently de-fictionalised in *Stargates* and has featured prominently in all his works since. *Apollyon* combines this technoscientific focus with the New Age and *Kulturkampf*-emphases of his early works, crafting a scenario in which America is a demonological vessel, founded by anti-Christian deists to generate a New Atlantis that culminates in the (re)creation of the Antichrist. In casting America as always-already demonic, Horn is distinct from those authors analysed in earlier chapters. I will unpick this aspect later, as it relates closely to his broader fixations on origination and predestination.

While Horn's books all contribute to his narrative, I draw primarily on *Forbidden Gates* (Horn and Horn 2010), which I believe is the most 'complete' work on 'transhumanism', and *Zenith 2016* (2013), his updated narrative of America's Antichristic origins and destiny. I supplement these with the essays collated in *Pandemonium's Engine* (2011) and *Blood on the Altar* (2014), which combine work by Horn and others in the milieu. Through analysing these texts, I focus on exploring two interwoven threads in Horn's works that partake in a complex theopolitics of prophetic temporality. The first is the projection of modern technoscience back into the biblical narrative of Noah, creating a scenario in which transhumanism is both ancient and already-vanquished. The second is Horn's narrative of America as

⁶ There is, however, a pointer to Horn's later engagement with ufology and other New Age concerns. At one point, Horn explores six possibilities for the origins of demons 'offered by modern religious authorities' (1998: 55). These include them being (1) a psychological projection, (2) spirits of a pre-Adamic race, (3) other-worldly beings, (4) biblical *nephilim*, (5) ghosts of the evil dead, or (6) fallen angels. Horn deliberately shies away from identifying one as true, merely marking demons as a 'mysterious and militant' force that has operated throughout history (*ibid.* 65), however while most of the sections begin with phrases like 'Those who believe...', the third (other-worldly creatures) starts with 'Consider these facts' and then lists a number of ancient alien tropes, like the alleged impossibility of humans building the Giza pyramids, culminating with 'Sufficient historical evidence does exist to suggest an invasion of earth by heavenly creatures thousands of years ago' (*ibid.* 56, 58). This suggests that the seeds of his later work are there from the beginning, even if the focus on transhumanism was not. Much of this section of *Spiritual Warfare* is reproduced in the later *Forbidden Gates*, but option one (psychological projections) has shifted to last place, and a new 'several of the above' option is included (Horn and Horn 2010: 23–32).

product of a Satanist-Masonic conspiracy for global rule. The logic that underlies both narratives is crystallised in the image of the *imago*. This *imago* is broader than (though inextricable from) the Christian *imago Dei*, and relates to the discursive inseparability of origin and *telos* in Horn's oeuvre.

AS THE DAYS OF NOAH WILL HAVE BEEN

Imago. Scripturally it translates the Hebrew *tselem*, which denotes several things, not only Adam's resemblance to God but also Seth's to his father Adam, as well as statues as graven likenesses (Moore 2010: 205; Welz 2011:76). Etymologically, it relates to ideas of divine election, as of a king by his patron deity (Moritz 2011: 328–9), and genealogically has been used accordingly to mark humanity's uniqueness and place over the rest of creation (Schuele 2011; Welz 2011). Yet *tselem* has also been used to describe a certain transience to human life, notably in Psalms 39:6 where it becomes rendered as 'phantom' (NIV), 'shadow' (ISV), or 'vain show' (NKJV)—as '(mere) semblance' (Moore 2010: 205). Therefore, while ordinarily stable in its manifestations as flesh or stone, the *imago* bears within it a spectrality that unsettles it. Claudia Welz suggests that the *imago* cannot, or perhaps should not, be reduced to an icon or idol since it requires its relationality to the deity it approximates: its (dis)similarity must be preserved in order to not become self-referential, to not serve human apotheosis (2011: 86). The danger of this self-referentiality is one authors like Horn are acutely aware of.

This Biblical *imago*, already polyvalent, saturates the discourse I analyse here. In English, however, the word also refers to an insect's final metamorphosis—something bequeathed to science by eighteenth-century naturalist Carl Linnaeus, who like a 'second Adam' gave God's creatures new their genus-species names, infamously placing humans among primates (Corbey 2005: 44–7). This other meaning of *imago*, so-called 'because the insect, having thrown off its mask, becomes a perfect *image* of its species' (Rennie and Wood 1869: 20), is also relevant here. The idea that something's 'genetic' essence—*imago* in the first, biblical sense—conditions its ultimate image of perfection—*imago* in the latter, entomological,

sense—is an idea that infiltrates and occupies all Horn’s works, although it takes subtly different forms. For Horn, as I will show, *imago* determines *imago*; essential origin determines telic metamorphosis. More than this it destines it, predestines it, even (p)redestines it. This last construction points to a seemingly paradoxical pattern of inverse causation—that telic metamorphosis (p)redetermines essential origin—which relies on and subverts an apocalyptic/prophetic structure of time, in which everything new is (or must be) ancient, archaic, and already-over(come).

Semblances of Futures Past

‘[T]he science of human enhancement and transhumanism,’ write the Horns, ‘is unwittingly playing into the hands of powerful supernaturalism toward a Luciferian endgame—something “it” tried once before, and which “it” was prophesized to attempt again just before the end of time’ (2010: 151). The ‘endgame’ the authors are referring to in this passage relates to the scientific creation of a synthetically-produced lifeform which the Horns and their associated writers believe paves the way for the creation of the Antichrist. This pattern of inscribing contemporary phenomena as the latest iteration of an ancient enemy is a recurrent pattern in the texts examined, from the ‘Jezebel spirit’ to demoniac Caliphates. The Horns and associated authors utilise a similar strategy to those analysed above, recasting a modern adversary as an old one reborn. But while technology generally has a history of apocalyptic appropriation, transhuman technologies would appear to be undeniably new.

The Horns circumvent this in two ways. First they construct transhumanism as the latest resurgence of the ‘religion of man’—an anthropocentric pseudo-religion that exalts artifice over authenticity and lead to the creation of wrath-inducing edifices like the Tower of Babel. Second, they proceed to construct a narrative in which the exact technologies they are ideologically combatting, rather than just the ideas behind them, are also ancient. To do so, the Horns turn to the Biblical narrative of the Deluge and the events that precipitated it. As others used the tale of Jezebel’s sexually licentious and religiously polytheist ‘reign of iniquity’ to frame modern-day woes, the Horns appropriate the story of the *nephilim*, offspring of the ‘sons of god’ and the ‘daughters of man’ who walked the earth in the days of Noah. They adapt this from Genesis 6:1–12, which is worth quoting at length:

Now it came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.

And the LORD said, 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.' There were giants [*nephilim*] on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.' But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

The Horns focus on three aspects of this narrative: Noah's condition of perfection relative to his generation, the corruption and eradication of 'all flesh,' and the creation of the *nephilim* (giants) as human-angelic hybrids. They interweave this biblical tale with the detailed narrative found in the quasi-apocryphal I Enoch.⁷ I Enoch 1–36 relays the narrative of the fall of the 'sons of god', named the Watchers and led by the angel Semihaza, in considerable detail. These details are less relevant than the reasons provided for the Watchers' punishment, however. The work describes the Watchers as those 'who have left the high heaven, the holy eternal place, and have defiled themselves with women' (Horn and Horn 2010: 180). God then declares that these corrupted angels will obtain neither peace nor remission of sins, but shall watch the violence of their offspring multiply. The Horns cite the canonical book of Jude (1:6) in support of this: 'And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day' (2010: 181). As was present in other figurations of demonological evil as deviation, the main sin of the Watchers is desertion of their proper station and

⁷ I Enoch is technically canonical for parts of the Ethiopian Church, as well as the Beta Israel.

sexual-spiritual contamination (*ibid.*). Their originary transgression has considerable ramifications, however, ultimately distorting the entire order of creation, expanding until ‘all flesh’ is rendered corrupt and requires eradication. All but Noah, whose unique perfection grants him reprieve. Unlike traditional readings of the narrative, however, for the Horns this perfection is not just moral but biological: ‘his physical makeup—his DNA—had not been contaminated by Nephilim descent, as apparently the rest of the world had become’ (Horn 2011a: 43).

The conflation of biological and moral purity is closely linked to the milieu’s construction of transhumanism. As Gary Stearman (2011: 133–4) writes, God created ‘human beings in precisely the way He wanted’ and modification is thus ‘blasphemy’. He continues:

Those who study prophecy have come to understand that something like this happened once before, during the days of antediluvian man. The Flood of Noah was nothing more or less than the global condemnation of this sort of evil experimentation.

For the milieu, transhumanistic technoscience is not just akin to this demonic intervention, but identical, oriented towards a similar deviation of human essence. Drawing on 1 Enoch, the Horns relate how the renegade Watchers taught humanity divine knowledge, giving them technologies they should not have had: metalwork, military tactics, dyeing, cosmetics, sorcery, astronomy, and herbalism. They also turn to another apocryphal work of more dubious provenance and status, Jasher, for further explication: after being given the secrets of heaven, ‘the sons of men [began] the mixture of animals of one species with another, in order therewith to provoke the Lord’ (Jasher 4:18).⁸

The Horns interpret this line to mean that the Watchers taught humanity genetic engineering. As Thomas Horn writes, this phrase ‘cannot mean Watchers had taught men standard hybridisation, as this would not have “provoked the Lord.” God made like animals of different breeds capable of reproducing...It would [thus] not

⁸ The history of the text today known as the book of Jasher is nebulous. While it is referred to on two occasions in the Hebrew Bible (Joshua 10:13 and II Samuel 1:18), their relationship to those we have today is debatable. Indeed, Arthur Chiel notes that this nebulosity lent itself to a rise of ‘pseudoepigraphical identifications and imitations’, and proceeds to analyse two: an eleventh-century text in fluent Biblical Hebrew (which became a seventeenth-century bestseller, with six reprints across Europe between 1628 and 1815) and a later 1757 text in English entirely unrelated to the former (1977). Much like his usage of First Enoch, Horn does not justify his use of Jasher as a main source for his narrative.

have “provoked the Lord” for this type of animal breeding to have taken place, as God, Himself, made the animals able to do this’ (2011a: 41–2; see also Horn and Horn 2010: 183). Other authors, like Hamp and McTernan, echo this. Using more canonical sources, both craft their objections via Genesis 1:24: ‘And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.’ Hamp decries genetic tampering because even if ‘the percentage of [one creature in another] is only 1/70,000th’ the creature is no longer ‘completely according to its own kind’, and ‘mixing two different kinds violates God’s principle and will ultimately end poorly’ (2011: 236). McTernan’s argument is more anthropocentric, hinging specifically on the *imago Dei* and arguing that genetic tampering in humans, especially the introduction of animal DNA, destroys this and makes humanity something other (2011). Putnam reiterates this point, implicitly linking transhuman augmentation to murder by noting that ‘the prohibition of murder in Genesis 9:6 is based on the fact that the human was created in God’s image. It seems reasonable to extend that to include posthuman alteration’ (2011: 202). The writers herein weave a narrative that hinges on a core essence, (demonic) deviation from which is equated to death and ontological absence.

A Sovereign Simulacrum

The idea that technoscientific tampering distorts or destroys the *imago Dei* is a core feature of the narratives of both the Horns and other writers in the milieu (J.M. Bennett 2011; T.L. Cook and Horn 2013; Gilbert 2011; D. Hamp 2011; Horn 2011a; Horn and Horn 2010; Hutchings 2011; McTernan 2011; Missler 2011; Putnam 2011; Stearman 2011; Teichrib 2011). Through the creation of creatures ‘outside of their own kind’, the Horns fear demons will be able to assert greater control over humans and human society, a control for which the culmination comes in a scenario Horn first posits in *Apollyon*, in which the Watchers’ original corruption of biological purity was intended to manufacture a body unlike the ‘kinds’ of being God made: a combination of human, animal, and plant genetics in a new being where the spirit God breathed into humanity and other lifeforms cannot dwell, and into which the Watchers would be able to incarnate their own spirits (2010: 185; see also Gilbert 2011). The modern

(re)creation of hybrid lifeforms via transhuman technologies is linked both to the days of Noah and the forthcoming end-times struggle (Horn and Horn 2010: 186):

[A]s interbreeding begins between transgenic animals, genetically modified humans, and species as God made them, the altered DNA will quickly migrate into the natural environment...perhaps [this] has been the whole idea of the end-times...to create a generation of genetically altered 'fit extensions' for the resurrection of underworld Nephilim hordes in preparation for Armageddon.

Since such transhumans would actually be 'part "beast"', Horn subsequently posits this development as a fulfilment of Revelation 13:16–17, the 'Mark of the Beast'. He writes elsewhere (2011a: 52–3):

No longer 'entirely human' would also mean...that the individual could no longer be 'saved' or go to heaven, explaining why the book of Revelation says 'whosoever receiveth the mark' is damned forever while also explaining why the Nephilim similarly could not be redeemed.

The Antichrist forms the crux of this process as actual or symbolic representation of the diabolisation of humanity broadly, a recreation of the *nephilim* as the 'reunion of demons with humans' (*ibid.*). That this diabolisation is a bestialisation—a recreation of humanity as beast—gestures to the relation of the beast to the sovereign I examined earlier, and to a fixation on evolutionary theory, which already symbolically enacts this.⁹ It also points to the relation of 'substance' to what lies beneath it. As David Goldberg writes (2006: 348), ideas of substance always rely on

changing conceptions of sub-stance or sub-standing, of sub-being or non-being. Being comes to know itself only through what it takes itself not to be, to non-being...Human being is delineated in contrast to, in repulsion from, the creaturely or beastly that is taken always as the threat to 'us', to our well-being. The beastly is identified invariably to underscore the condition of human being, and by extension of being human.

This relationship figures distinctly in the Horns' *nephilim* narrative. The angels are first demonised by their cohabitation-contamination with/by human women (initiated by their descent from a proper ontological position). This contagion spreads through a destruction of substance—angel merges with human merges with animal merges with plant, until nothing is as it should be, until nothing *is*—just counterfeit creatures in a

⁹ Transhumanism is often linked to evolutionary theory by the milieu. McTernan, for example, laments that evolution 'detaches man from his Creator and being created in God's image and likeness...Man is now a free agents to tamper with his DNA under the guise of advancing evolution' (2011: 268), while Hamp laments that the teaching of evolution removes God, and 'With God removed, we can understand how mixing two different kinds of animals in order to "evolve" to a new level raises very few flags...After all, they say we *came* from animals' (2011: 238).

counterfeit creation that must thus be exposed, swept away, begun anew. For the milieu, this counterfeit threatens (again) to efface an original, using contemporary technoscience to destabilising its ontological borders, calling its essence into question.

The (im)possible persistence of this simulacrum of being is a point of tension for the milieu. While authors like those examined in earlier chapters were also fixated on the demonic as a force of boundary transgression, the fixation on transgression in the works analysed here is quite different. The most notable area of differentiation is that authors fixated on ‘Jezebel’ or ‘Islam’ were often focused on freeing individuals and institutions from them, restoring them to a pristine, originary condition. For the Horns and associated writers, the transhumanist transgression is more permanent: by transgressing the boundaries of the human, transhumanism has the ability to create vessels for demonic habitation, changing humans irrevocably by surgically removing the *imago Dei* and replacing it with a diabolic simulacrum. It is not that they lack the same concern with originary purity, quite the opposite, but that there is a clearer point of no return. Once this threshold is crossed humanity is diabolised—it is transformed and made demonic. In an etymological sense it is ‘thrown across’ (*diaballein*, ‘to throw across’), passing over a divide on the way to something radically other.

For the Horns and others, this diabolisation alters the essence of humanity—removing the ability of the soul to dwell in this new flesh and opening that space for a diabolic other—and through this changes humanity’s destiny. Hutchings (2011: 252) elaborates on this point, connecting it directly to broader issues of sovereignty and territory:

In a kingdom, there must be a territory, citizens, and a king. God made Adam and Eve to begin a human race to inhabit and rule over the earth just as the angels were to rule and serve with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven. But Satan... rebelled to exalt his own appointed authority over the Kingdom of God. The text and reasons seem to dictate that when he failed to make Adam and Eve his own servants to rule over this planet, he sent his own angels to transform mankind into beings that would do his own will rather than complete the mission given to them by the Creator.

Though Hutchings does not make it clear, one can infer that it is not humans that rightly rule Earth but rather the *imago Dei* which they embody that operates as the ground of sovereign right: as God rules the Kingdom of Heaven, those made in His image rule the earthly, and the aim of the demonic other seems to be to replace this

image and thereby irreparably modify humanity's (divine) mission. The monologic of sovereignty is clear here in a number of ways, from the penetration of the sovereign territory by an unwanted outsider to the fragmentation of the 'kingdom' through the corruption of the monarch. The logic used also relies on a *topos* I examined above—the demonic inability to create, and its attempt to generate change by means of the co-option and corruption of already-existing structures. Hutchings refer to this *topos* directly by writing that 'Satan cannot create; therefore, he attempts to transform what God has created into something that he can use to exalt himself above God' (2011: 252). In discourses of 'transhumanism', the structure the demonic seems set on co-opting is 'the human' itself, as conceptual and substantive lynchpin of God's creation. By fundamentally altering the guarantor of human sovereign right—the *imago Dei*—the demonic is able to radically transform the kingdom of earth into something that is fundamentally demoniac. It creates a counterfeit world, but a counterfeit for which the original has already been erased.

The Crucible

The ideological fulcrum of this takeover takes place in what the milieu's authors call the 'religion of man', and the construction of this enemy reveals several related issues in constructions of demoniac (trans)humanism. Much like 'Jezebel' or 'Islam,' the 'religion of man' provides an apparently unified, transhistorical enemy for the writers. However, this construction of the unified enemy also draws on the theopolitical genealogy of human and demonic shared experience of postlapsarian exile—the idea that 'no one is more similar to us than the devil, for no one but the devil shares our outcast condition' (Maggi 2001: 1). As opposition to a true religion based on heaven, the 'religion of man' is often coded by the writers through models of tangibility and worldliness, recalling the ideological thread of the *saeculum* I noted earlier (Calhoun 2012: 342). Carl Teichrib notes this tangibility when he writes that 'False religion—the abandonment of the true Yahweh for an alternative—is frequently accompanied by a tangible edifice or system' (2011: 301), while in 1999 Thomas Horn identified New Age spiritualities as demonic by their apparent desire to 'unify the masses of the world under a single religious umbrella, and, at the macro level, harmonically converge the world's energies with the power of Gaia' (Horn and Jones 1999: 170).

For Teichrib, Horn, and others, the foremost model of this counterfeit system is Babel. Unlike Jennifer LeClaire, however, the writers here do not obscure parts of the narrative to craft a simple narrative of divine unity and demonic division. Instead, Babel is representative of a united humanity operating under Luciferian guidance for Antichristic ends: ‘the construction of a tower-city [is] representative of Man’s power via a unified objective’, Teichrib writes (2011: 301). It is worth noting that Nimrod, the king traditionally held responsible for Babel, is sometimes identified as a hybridised *nephilim*, his post-diluvian position (and descent from Noah) requiring a narrative of continued demonic interference in earthly matters (Horn and Horn 2010: 192–7; see also J.M. Bennett 2011; Horn and Putnam 2012; Lake 2014).¹⁰ Indeed, Horn’s narrative in *Zenith* reinscribes Nimrod as the Egyptian god Osiris, whose dismemberment and reassembly/resurrection is reinscribed as a recoding of the Babel narrative, dismemberment symbolising the scattering of peoples and languages and resurrection prophesying the eschatological reunification of (post)humanity (2013: 324–332).

For Horn, the locus of this eschatological reunion is America—in many ways the America demonised in earlier chapters, eroded by multiculturalism and changing social attitudes to sexuality and gender, where even Christianity is contaminated (Horn 2013, 2014a). Yet Horn differs from those other writers in that he does not appeal to an essence of America that has been eroded. Instead, America is constructed as a demonic vessel and these changing cultural attitudes are not a deviation from America’s essence but its fulfilment. This might seem strange, however it operates within a discursive trend originating from the importing of New World Order (NWO) conspiracies into evangelical eschatologies (Barkun 2010: 129–32), conspiracies that Horn wholly integrates into his apocalyptic scenario. As I shall show, Horn’s use of these conspiracies compliments and subverts the underlying logic of origin and *telos* that permeates his writings.

As Michael Barkun elaborates, the NWO operates as a unifying aspect in an increasingly diverse conspiracist subculture, which at heart claims that ‘both past and

¹⁰ Part of this association likely stems from Josephus’ account used by Jennifer LeClaire, which I discussed briefly in Chapter Five: ‘[Nimrod] said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach’ (in LeClaire 2013: 66).

present events must be understood as the outcome of efforts by an immensely powerful but secret group to seize control of the world' (2003: 39). As I noted in Chapter Three, American civil religion has resulted in a broader cultural discourse of America as an engine of redemptive power, a saviour nation. America, however, has no formal place in scripture, granting it an undecidability. Barkun (2010: 131) argues that NWO conspiracies represent a significant shift in US apocalyptic discourse by giving vehicle to pre-existing eschatologically-tinged mutterings about 'declining moral standards' and approaching judgement:

Where previous doom-and-gloom scenarios concerning the United States emerged organically out of religious ideas, the New World Order constituted a comprehensive theory of political evil that was now grafted onto religious conceptions. In doing so, it turned the millennial role of America upside-down.

This new eschatological America is a nation ruled by demonic forces whose salvation can only come by divine intervention. These evil forces

control major institutions...public and private: corporations, universities, media, and government agencies. Their operatives have infiltrated the corridors of power. They are in constant communication with counterparts in other regions of the world...[and] await only a signal to make the final open grab for total power (*ibid.*).

Horn's tale is fairly typical of NWO-oriented conspiracisms about America, although he tinges this with his emphasis on *nephilim* resurrection. For Horn, America is a product of Masonic occultism (2013: 41–59) and engineered to create a 'New Atlantis', a process that entered its final stage after the events of 9/11:

Symbolically, the Twin Towers in New York (as pillars) echoed the Masonic archetype where...[pillars] represented passageways, beyond which one could travel to reclaim what Masons believe was lost in Atlantis...Accordingly, if before 9/11 leaders of truly dark powers determined that the ascendancy for the New Atlantis had arrived, occult magical tradition suggests they might have triggered an event surrounding a mega-ritual-offering...powerful enough to move their invisible empire beyond the pillars in New York...by igniting global changes accompanied with appropriate symbolism within the context of ultranational alchemical transformation (*ibid.*: 64–5).

Horn draws the image of the New Atlantis from the works of Francis Bacon. Bacon is an important ideological figure within transhumanism, and Horn's deployment of him is not accidental. For Horn, entering the gates to this New Atlantis symbolises 'movement past the limitations of existing scholarship into the area of unlimited

scientific and anomalous knowledge' (*ibid.*: 63). Moreover, it represents the coming culmination of the Satanist-Masonic purpose for which America was founded. Horn lists a 'Rosicrucian-Masonic brotherhood [that] was involved in the American and French revolutions' (possibly the Illuminati) and the fact that as many as forty-four of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence were Freemasons as proofs of this origin. Moving from these quasi-historical elements to note that occult symbols coded into the architecture of Washington, DC, create a 'talisman-like layout' of streets, government buildings and 'Masonic monuments' to form an 'electric-type grid' that 'pulsates' with Luciferian power 'twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week' (*ibid.*: 113). Horn draws these disparate elements together, concluding that:

According to the symbolism in Washington, D.C., the secret destiny of America includes future national and global subservience to the god of Freemasonry, a deity most Americans would not imagine when reciting the pledge of allegiance to 'one nation under god.' In fact, the idea by some that the United States was established as a monotheistic 'Christian nation'...is a puzzling conclusion when reflected against the deistic beliefs of so many of the founding fathers...and the countless pagan icons that dominate the symbols, statues, buildings and seals carefully drafted under official government auspices (*ibid.*: 119–20).

This passage portrays a resurgence of the relationship of origin to destiny that permeated Horn's *nephilim* narrative. While Horn's inscription of American NWO as the terminus of a grand historical conspiracy is common in NWO conspiracies (Barkun 2013; Fenster 2008; Knight 2003), in Horn's paradigm it also fits into an ideological fixation with genetic predestination. He does not attempt to address how the complex history of Christianity in the US fits into his narrative of its ultimate demonic purposes, focusing on (what he reads as) the occult and esoteric symbolism encoded into the founding of the nation and (thus) determining its 'secret destiny'. This destiny is reached with the transhuman (re)creation of the *nephilim*, beginning with the Antichrist (2013: 193–209).¹¹

¹¹ Horn's eschatologically oriented comparative mythology is too complex to explain fully, but hinges on a conflation of the Egyptian gods Osiris and Horus, the Greek god Apollo, and the Babylonian king Nimrod, as well as a linguistic elision whereby 'Apollo' becomes 'Apollyon', angel of the abyss from Revelation 9:11. There is an ancient folk etymology that supports the last: both Aeschylus and Euripides trace Apollo's name to the same root as Apollyon, *apollymi/apollyō*, and Homer's *Iliad* portrays him as a frightening god who sends 'deadly pestilence' (Broek 1999: 74–7), an association mimicked by the figure in Revelation, a king of abyssal locusts. With the exception of Horus' with Apollo, which traces to Herodotus (Mikalson 2003: 181), Horn's other associations are more specious. His rationale is that the Osiris myth is 'a "devil's view" of history, where the perspectives and

Origins of Emergency

Imago determines imago, irrespective of hitches on the road to metamorphosis. The mask is shed; the perfect image emerges. America's becoming a modern-day bastion of the 'religion of man' is coded as merely the fulfilment of a course set at the moment of its birth as a nation. It could never have become otherwise. This is a crucial point; it relates to the ways that demonological transhumanism is figured in the texts of the milieu. For Horn, the imago (*Dei*) of humanity guarantees its essence and path to perfectibility in God; however, transhuman techno-science is coded as capable of retroactively altering this essential origin—it effaces the *imago Dei* that humanity embodies, replaces it with something other and blurs the division between nature and artifice at an ontological level. It (p)redestines humanity by forever removing the possibility of (the milieu's model of) Christian soteriology. Yet rather than removing the possibility of salvation, transhumanism constructs an alternative soteriology based on technological transformation, one that eschews an eternity beyond time in favour of an immortality of endless time (Waters 2011: 164). It offers authentic fake salvation for authentic fake humanity. The effacement of the *imago Dei* that has apparently long been the goal of the 'religion of man' is ultimately a discourse of human (and demonic, human *as* demonic) autonomy and sovereignty, of the impossible possibility of a (p)redestination that tries to wipe the slate clean and write anew.

Like an imperfect palimpsest, however, this discourse cannot completely efface its original scription. This cuts to the heart of what makes transhumanism so terrifying to Horn and others in the milieu. It relates to what Brent Waters gestured to by calling it and Christianity 'contending salvific religions', seeking to conquer finitude in different, even opposing, ways (2011: 163–6), and via this to a genealogy of secular (trans)humanism in the Christianity it disavows. If, to paraphrase Charles Taylor, the West is secular because it was—and continues to be, albeit in irreducibly altered fashion—religious (2007: 791–2), then it might be fair to posit that it is

roles...are reversed' (2011). Set in this reading is merged with the Biblical Seth, third and sole surviving child of Adam and Eve, and his slaying of Osiris is constructed as referring to Genesis 3:15, when God tells the serpent (Satan) that he 'will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed'. Osiris/Horus is configured as one of the anthropo-demonic *nephilim* as the serpent's seed, whereas Set(h) is a descendent of true humanity (Horn 2011, 2013).

transhumanist because it was—and continues to be, in irreducibly altered fashion—Christian. Maybe even, as Nancy posited, ‘Christian in its depths’ (2008: 34).

(HUMAN) NATURE AND THE INSTAURATION OF SOVEREIGNTY

In ‘Pandemonium and “Her” Children’, Horn links transhumanism to Gnosticism, writing that one can easily recognise in the former ‘the ancient origin of its heresy as the incarnation of Gnosticism and its disdain for the human body as basically an evil design that is far inferior to what we can make it’ (2011a: 61). While this is a reductionist view, my purpose here is not to defend or refute the historicity of Horn’s understanding of Gnosticism; much like the projection of modern technoscience onto the days of Noah or evolutionary theory onto ancient Egyptian religion (Horn and Jones 1999: 42), he uses the linkage to code transhumanism as something ancient. The connection drawn to Gnosticism is not random, however. Waters notes that transhumanist philosophies draw on the legacy of particular Christian heresies: they echo ‘a Manichean disdain of a corrupt, if not evil, material body from which the soul must be rescued’ and a ‘Pelagian reiteration of the ability of humans to will themselves to perfection’ (2011: 171). That Horn chooses Gnosticism specifically might also go beyond its popular alignments with body hatred and point to the way that—to use Jeffrey Kripal’s opening to *The Serpent’s Gift*—it was the Sethian Gnostics who ‘could not help noticing just who in the story [of Eden] was graciously bestowing knowledge (the serpent) and who was jealously and rather pettily trying to prevent it (God)’ (2007: 1).

While Horn’s scenarios are fanciful, his identification of transhumanism as not fully modern has some grounding, although not (just) the one he selects. As discussed above, a number of scholars of religion and transhumanism have noted the latter’s underlying theologic. Rather than being a modern variant of Gnosticism’s alleged hatred for physicality, however, transhumanism’s genealogy is more complicated. Among other theologemes, it has roots in the binary mind/body and how this binary relates to divisions between culture and nature and ideas of dominion over the latter as integral to humanity’s return to Edenic perfection. This genealogy is of particular

importance to how demonological transhumanism is coded as threatening in the scenarios of Horn and his associates.

The Slow March (Back) to Paradise

Several scholars, including Deane-Drummond (2011), Burdett (2011, 2015), and Andrea Nightingale (2011), have tied discourses of transhumanism to a secularisation of theopolitical ideas of dominion over nature. In the context of transhumanism, Deane-Drummond and Nightingale link dominion to the opposition between mind and body in Western thought, extending genealogically to Neo-Platonic influence on Augustine. As Deane-Drummond writes, this influence is well documented—the feature most relevant to discourses of transhumanity, however, is the privileging of human reason as the crucial point of human differentiation from other animals. Augustine projected this binary onto the Genesis narrative, in which the *imago Dei* became reconfigured as the ‘rational substance’ of (hu)man(ity): ‘Thus’, the theologian relates in his unfinished *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, “‘Let us make man in our image and likeness” is correctly understood according to what is within man and is his principle part, that is, according to the mind. For the whole of man should be assessed from that which holds the principle place in man and which distinguishes him from beasts’ (in Deane-Drummond 2011: 120).¹²

Deane-Drummond argues that modern transhumanisms are secularisations of this conceptual framework, assuming that mental activity is the ‘prime source of happiness’ and failing to assume any good-in-itself for bodily existence as such, and which thus ‘still [hope] for salvation through human mental aspirations’ (2011: 122). As transhumanist philosopher Nick Bostrom (a popular target of Horn) writes, ‘It is not our human shape or the details of our current human biology that define what is valuable about us, but rather our aspirations and ideals, our experiences, and the kinds of lives we lead’ (2014: 2). This view is echoed by other prominent transhumanists like Ray Kurzweil and Hans Moravec, who hold that the true locus of the person is in

¹² The legacy of this Augustinian dualism has been debated. Charles Taylor (1989) places it firmly on the trajectory from Plato to Descartes, but Michael Hanby (2003) argues that Cartesian dualism is mainly influenced by Stoicism, and suggests Augustine’s focus on doxology invalidates considering him ‘proto-Cartesian’. Irrespective of direct, clear lines of influence, this dualism sits in a genealogy that privileges mind over body as the locus of human uniqueness and/as its relation to the divine.

the mind, comprised of information, and the body a prosthetic which contains it: if the mind can be accurately preserved without the body, then, in Moravec's words, 'I am preserved. The rest is mere jelly' (Kurzweil 2000, 2005; 1988: 117). The locus of humanity is not in our embodiment but in our psychical manifestations.

In both religious and transhuman apocalypticisms of this type, hope for psychical salvation from imperfect embodiment manifests in patterns of sovereign ownership. This ownership manifests as a quasi-postmillennial utopianism that places humans in the role of perfecting nature by the application of reason. In the Christian version, this reason is marred by humanity's exilic state but ultimately reflects the semblance of the *imago Dei*. Human rule over nature, dominion, is coded as a route to salvation and features in several works by the milieu (Horn 2011a; Horn and Horn 2010: 163; Hutchings 2011; Putnam 2011). Regarding transhumanism, Burdett traces dominion via the works of Renaissance thinker Francis Bacon (1561–1626) (2015: 12–18; see also Wolyniak 2015).

Bacon acts as a kind of symbolic founder for transhumanism. Bostrom, author of one of the few comprehensive histories of the movement, links transhumanism to the 'rational humanism' of the Enlightenment that he identifies with the works of Bacon, notably the *Novum Organum* (Wolyniak 2015: 55); James Hughes links it to the utopianism of Bacon's *New Atlantis*, writing that it was Enlightenment thinkers who transformed religious 'millennial aspirations and proposed achieving a radically transfigured body and society through science and technology' (2012: 759). As I related above, Horn sees the transhuman future of contemporary America as a fulfilment of Bacon's *New Atlantis* (2013: 59–73), while Teichrib, writing on the flourishing of the 'religion of man', notes that 'Extraordinary individuals like Francis Bacon, Baruch de Spinoza, and Thomas Hobbes pushed old boundaries, setting in motion and propelling the Age of Reason. Enlightenment thus birthed secularism, humanistic rationality, higher criticism, and contemporary science' (2011: 302).

As Wolyniak argues, the transhumanist Bacon is heralded 'as a forebear, foreseer, and fighter for the method that potentiates technoscientific capacity'. He 'effectuates the transhumanist movement in its modern form—and perhaps enlivens it still' (2015: 58). While some (like Hughes) acknowledge a religious substrate, this is usually ignored in favour of Bacon's technoscientific legacy. Todd Daly notes that

this interpretation often rests on a reductionist reading of Christianity as disinterested in life extension, in contrast to which Bacon's explorations of human aging were often explicitly tied to a desire to return to prelapsarian perfection (2011: 134).¹³ Burdett also notes that, although often linked to secularisation, the utopic and even technological aspects of Bacon's works, particularly the *Instauratio Magna*, have deep theological underpinnings (2015: 12–18). Charles Whitney, for example, notes the theologically-charged nature of the term *instauratio*, a word not commonly used in Bacon's time but which is used in the Vulgate to refer to the rebuilding of the Temple after Babylonian captivity. Furthermore, via Augustine's influence it came to signify 'the new covenant' and in the context of the individual 'the instauration of the new man...signified by the resurrection' (1989: 379). Instauration thus refers to 'a divine action of restoration' (Matthews 2008: 52), and what is restored are the human faculties lost in the event of the Fall. As Bacon himself wrote (in Burdett 2015: 13):

[Innocence and dominion] can be repaired even in this life to some extent, the former by religion and faith, the latter by the arts and sciences. For the Curse did not make the creation an utter and irrevocable outlaw. In virtue of the sentence 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread', man, by manifold labours... compels the creation, in time and in part, to provide him with bread, that is to serve the purposes of human life.

Burdett interprets this passage by noting that the Fall brought 'alienation from God and a marred relation with Creation', and that while the first could only be healed by supernatural or ecclesiastic means, the second was in humanity's active potential to fix (2015: 13). Peter Harrison (2007: 158) corroborates this reading, noting that although innocence could only be restored by grace, dominion 'made possible by Adamic knowledge' was a 'natural capacity' within humanity's reach, an idea with long ideological reach: the idea of this

struggle to recover, through effort and industry in the present life, capacities that were once part of the natural endowment of human beings was integral to the Protestant vision of the earthly vocation. This vision informed seventeenth-century English projects to recover the dominion over nature that had been lost as a consequence of Adam's sin.

Sovereignty over nature was thus a core aspect of a greater project to restore humanity to prelapsarian wholeness (Burdett 2015: 13). While often astute in

¹³ Additionally, as noted by Mercer and Maher life extension is often one of the least objected-to aspects of posthumanist philosophy from religious quarters (2014: xiv), though it often gets murkier when the methods involved are genetic tampering (see also Maher 2008)

comparing Christianity and transhumanism, Waters misses the ways that transhumanist beliefs regarding mastery of nature grows from not just heretical but also orthodox Christianities, and that in some ways the seeming opposition to the *imago Dei* found in transhumanist philosophy might actually be its discursive continuation and fulfilment—a possibility utilised by ‘techno-enthusiastic’ Christian thinkers like Ted Peters (2011: 64) and Stephen Garner (2011: 92–6).

Dark Mirrors

The transhumanist instauration adopts a particular semblance in contrast to its theological progenitor, adopting a ‘fully’ secularised form that shifts the position of humanity from that of quasi-outsider perfecting fallen nature to part of the nature that needs perfecting—albeit still by human artifice. To use Bacon’s terms, there is now only dominion rather than innocence, or rather innocence has been integrated as one aspect of dominion. This relates to the emergence of Western secularisation from Christianity itself, in which it recodes suffering and other theological concepts so that the agents of this-worldly redemption must also be this-worldly.

Working in this apparent paradox, some more ‘technoenthusiastic’ Christian appropriations of transhuman ideologies have drawn on the theological paradigm of the ‘created co-creator’ developed by Philip Hefner and inspired by Donna Haraway’s 1985 theorisation of the cyborg as a creature ‘simultaneously animal and machine, [populating] worlds ambiguously natural and crafted,’ a creatureliness which imposes itself onto us all as ‘chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism’ (1993: 272). In this model, human agency is reconfigured as God’s will, designed ‘to birth the future that is most wholesome for the nature that has birthed us’ conceived in cultural and ecological terms (Hefner 1993: 27). By this logic, the *imago Dei* grants us a capacity or even duty for creation (Lebacqz 2011: 57), in which the human adopts a hybridity as nexus of biology, culture and, spirituality (Garner 2011: 93). Some transhumanist Christians, like Ted Peters, even gesture to predestination by (re)configuring the *imago Dei* as ‘a divine draw toward future reality’—as omniscient and extra-temporal, God creates ‘from the future’ and humanity is drawn inexorably to the eschatological fulfilment it has always-already been (2000: 147).

The Horns resort to a similarly eschatological patterns, albeit in radically

different form. As with other spiritual warriors, they rely on the prophetic structure of time to foreclose on the territories (persons and places) occupied by the demonic. While for those like Peters the eschatological horizon acts as a sort of retroactive justification for technoscientific enhancement (albeit within limits), the Horns and associates use the same horizon to condemn it, marking it as inimical to God's plan. They do not make these assessments purely in a void, however. Much as the rhetoric used by the Bush Government in the early days of the War on Terror was critiqued for mirroring and unintentionally justifying al-Qaeda's own narratives of cosmic war (Adib-Moghaddam 2006: 77), the anti-religious rhetoric used by some transhumanists plays into narratives like the Horns'. Examples include Kurzweil's categorisation of religion as 'deathist rationalization' that sees death as a good (2005: 372) or Moravec's dramatic exhortation that '*As humanism freed us from the chains of superstition, let transhumanism free us from our biological chains*' (1988: 44). Not to mention Max More's 'In Praise of the Devil', published in his magazine *Extropy*, which ends with an exhortation fitting directly into currents of symbolic Satanism: 'Join me, join Lucifer, and join *Extropy* in fighting God and his entropic forces with our minds, our wills and our courage. God's army is strong, but they are backed by ignorance, fear and cowardice. Reality is fundamentally on our side. Forward into the light!' (1991: n.p.).

Although genealogical similarities exist between transhumanism and Western Christianities, there are also a number of ideological incompatibilities that I believe the vociferous oppositions of Hutchings or Horn draw out more clearly than milder critiques or attempts at assimilation. Moreover, I hold that the complex relationship between these incompatibilities and their shared genealogy indicates why it is transhumanism those like Horn finds so threatening. Waters noted competing soteriologies of temporality: transhumanism 'seeks immortality', Christianity 'awaits eternity' (2011: 172). Earlier, I linked this problematic to broader issues of the secular and secularisation in that transhumanism represented an infinitisation of the *saeculum* itself rather than its eschatological erasure. While for thinkers like Nancy the secular's theological foundations asked us to reflect on the intrinsically Christian character of the West and for Asad it asked us to question the way secular ideologies grew from theological seeds, for those like Horn the subsuming of the 'religious' into the

‘secular’ becomes encoded in a theological and (moreover) eschatological model of history. It (re)inscribes secularisation as diabolisation, as becoming-*diabolos*.

The genealogical relationship between secular transhumanism and Christian theologies results in a movement of literalisation by Horn and associates that relates discursively to the milieu’s fixation on ufology. Christopher Partridge, for example, examines the modern discourse of malevolent extra-terrestrials in light of historical Christian demonological discourses and notes crucial similarities, observing that the aliens are often construed as trans-dimensional entities that are threatening to human’s physical and spiritual health (2004: 180). While benevolent aliens in ufology often draw on Theosophical traditions,

the malevolent alien...owes much to the history of Christian demonology. The alien as technological demon is popular because it seems plausible, seems plausible because it seems familiar, and seems familiar because it has been constructed from Western demonology (*ibid.*: 173).

For the Horns and others, this relationship is literalised in one of two ways: modern aliens are traditional demons or traditional demons were always-already aliens, although they usually gravitate towards the former (Horn 1998: 55–65; Horn and Horn 2010: 23–32). This same pattern of literalisation is present in interpretations of secularism and transhumanism: their genealogical relationship to, and growing prominence (in the West) over, traditional Christianity is read as a demonological co-option of the structures of society, the rise of a cultural form founded on the demonic precepts of worldliness and artifice and guided by a hidden satanic hand.

Accordingly, transhumanism is (re)configured as a resurgence of the ‘religion of man’—that ancient schema of anthropo-demonic championing of artifice over essence—and its soteriologies are (re)configured as the becoming-transcendent of fallen time, infinitising the *saeculum* in a manner that negates (a need for) eternity. Its language and relationship to temporality marks it as threatening to the Horns and others in the milieu. The language is familiar. It seems to speak the same tongue—‘Immortality, perfectibility, dominion, transcendence’ (Allenby and Sarewitz 2011: 17)—but the words do not seem to mean what they should. The meanings have shifted, like society has shifted, becoming other. This gives it an uncanniness reminiscent of the figurations of ‘Islam’ I analysed above, which also appear to mimic the orthotaxy desired by the writers. Unlike that ‘Islam’, however, transhumanism is

inescapably Western and in significant ways inescapably Christian. Not an imposition from ‘outside’—as in demonological ‘Islam’ or ‘Jezebel’—the transhumanist ‘religion of man’ emerges from within the West via the secularisation of its theological structures. By doing so, demonic transhumanism complicates orthotaxic concepts of inevitable teleology by using the same base concepts for different (but similar, so similar) ends—an end of all flesh as culmination, not termination.

The True False Dawn

Transhumanism is threatening to apocalypticists like Horn because it resembles—as semblance, as spectre—the Christianity it disavows. It is an ‘authentic fake’ that both is and is not the imago of the *imago Dei*. This undecidability haunts both the narratives of Horn, in which it represents the transient pseudo-triumph of a demonic other within the *saeculum*, and the narratives of transhumanists like Kurzweil or Moravec, who hold it to be humanity’s ascent beyond archaic, religiously-determined models of the human in favour of deciding, sovereignly, its own destiny. The division between these poles is not one of ‘either/or’ but rather rests in an interstice between ‘both/and’ and ‘neither/nor’, an interstice for which transhumanism’s genealogy, and the genealogy of the secular that it transfigures, is the fulcrum. The problem faced by the Horns and other members of the milieu, however, is that an apparently immutable imago, the *imago Dei* that set in place the limits of and path to human perfectibility through the fulfilling of God’s will, has suddenly seemingly become mutable. Yet if transhumanist soteriologies can be viewed as emerging from the discursive legacy of the *imago Dei*, then imago has still determined imago. The mask has been shed, but the perfected image that emerged was not the one that was anticipated. As an imago of humanity’s (in)evitable future, transhumanism marks the idol that we, therefore, will always-already have been.

Horn and his associates encode this new imago like that of a butterfly: transient, easily broken on the wheel—as, they reassure themselves, it has been before, in the days of Noah, of Nimrod, and others. In the theologic of prophetic time, this old-new imago will always-already have died. But as I argue above, the familiarity they feel when looking at this emergent transhuman imago may be closer than the old heresies they choose to see in its form (though such heresies are also an

orthodoxy's unwanted children). Evangelicals like the Horns might be reacting to a competing model of soteriology, but this alter-soteriology is not (solely) the one they perceive it to be. To summarise, appropriating Partridge and applying his words to the milieu, transhumanism as technoscientific soteriology is terrifying to them because it seems plausible, seems plausible because it seems familiar, and seems familiar because it has been constructed from Western Christian discourses of salvation.

PART III

Descention (Redux)

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Counterfeit Gods

Sovereignty and its Demonologies—Imitations and Iterations

*'O you contemptible race, hunted from heaven,'
So [the angel] began, on that horrific threshold,
'Why does this insolence persist in you?
Why are you so recalcitrant to that will
Which cannot ever fail of its objective,
And which has more than once increased your pains?
What use to run your head against the fates?'*

— *Inferno* (IX.90–6)

Once more, the demons come, once more. This repetition repeats across the texts examined above. Islamist extremism repeats gentile antagonism to Israel in Exodus, opposing the legitimacy of God's chosen nation, Israeli or American. The increasing normality of non-normative gender roles and sexualities recreates the idolatrous orgies of Jezebel. Advances in technoscience and (trans)humanist philosophy are just the return of humanity's need for idolatrous self-deification—itself a repetition of angelic dissent. These repetitions are opposed by yet other repetitions—of Israel, of Elijah and Jehu, of Noah—culminating with the effacing fulfilment of an *eschaton* when, as Giorgio Agamben notes, 'repetition is no longer' (2005b: 77).

This repetition is tied to a politicisation of typological exegesis that saturates the texts I have explored. As discussed previously, typological structures rely on the assumption of a sovereign God operating in history. As Sidney Greidanus clarifies,

typology discovers ‘specific analogies along the axis of God’s acts in redemptive history’ and without the foundation of God’s sovereign direction of the historical process cannot exist (1999: 249). It reveals, in the words of Georges A. Barrois, a ‘sphere of divine economy in which man and the cosmos progress under the guidance of God towards eternal salvation’ (in *ibid.*: 255). ‘Old Testament’ persons and events become *typoi* of New Testament counterparts, who become not (only) a repetition but the advent of an archetype-yet-to-be. Kathleen Biddick (2013) argued, however, that typology used a logic of supersession in order to efface the (insolent) persistence of those *typoi*: it historicises in order to efface the continuation of a past that has supposedly been overcome, but which refuses to be over.

The persistence of this superseded past deconstructs the typological structures deployed by the authors analysed above. They interpellate present patterns into the biblical record, but the causality sometimes seems askew—for there is no need for Elijah or Jehu without Jezebel, no need for Noah without the Nephilim. God might be coded as history’s sole agent, but his redemptive actions seem too reactive, even reactionary. The demon—to cite Michael Hoelzl’s words on the Antichrist in modern messianisms—‘is the central and organizing space in the metaphysical matrix’ of their theopolitical thought (2010: 108). This dilemma is most clear in the writings of Horn and his associates, wherein it often seems as if Satan truly holds the reins of history, necessitating divine intervention. However, it is visible in the other texts I have analysed, which lament the turning of history from its proper course. They puzzle over perceived divergences, rationalise and refute them, but these deviations return to haunt them. The demon is always-already defeated, its subjectivity fixed from the moment of its subjection, yet it persists in its insolence, continues to run its head against the fates. As William Franke (1996: 126) notes, the question of *Inferno*’s celestial messenger with which I opened,

[brings] out the hermeneutical structures of historical existence, since it verbally crystallizes and throws into relief the end, the terminus, as the source and focus of historical being and envisages the potentiality for completion, that is, for being-a-whole, as the foundation for authentic temporal existence.

Structurally denied the potential for completion, the demon cannot possess authentic existence. Yet its insolence in the face of inevitability persists. The angel asks why,

but does not await answers. The authors surveyed above similarly do not wait. Their question is rhetorical. It reasons back from a foregone conclusion: the demon cannot create, and so it cannot sustain life, produce or reproduce, pass on a legacy, and thus cannot found its own legitimate, sovereign order. But the world started to change, to seemingly become other to teleological expectation. Suddenly, the spiritual warriors found themselves waiting, in the remains of a nation ‘that can only be saved by divine intervention’ (Barkun 2010: 131).

What is to be made of this typology of demons, this counterfeit competitor to the orthotaxy of history? This concluding chapter addresses this question over two sections. The first explores the core characteristics of the case studies of previous chapters as they relate to shifting conceptions of the locus of ‘true’ sovereignty—from God to state to people as embodiment of the popular sovereign of American civil religion. The second builds on this analysis, drawing on de Certeau’s analysis of the “diabolical” crisis’ as culturally-determined irruption of alterity and Jacques Derrida’s treatments of ipseity and the structure of iterability related to a theopolitics of prophetic time and the deferral of eschatological sovereign presence. I ultimately focus on the inherent instability of a sovereignty that codes itself as indivisible, yet which divides itself always-already from its inception. By examining this (in)divisibility, I then analyse how its supposed counterfeiting by its demonological other(s) constitutes another—albeit unintended, diabolic, and thus abjected—iteration of its sovereign claims to the future.

ROGUE LEVIATHANS: ORTHOTAXY AND ITS HETEROLOGIES

As briefly noted in Chapter Two, in 1589 the German Jesuit bishop Peter Binsfeld (c.1540–1603) produced his *Treatise on Confessions by Evildoers and Witches*. In this work, Binsfeld crafted a list of seven major devils, each correlated to a deadly sin. Some, such as Lucifer’s alignment with Pride or Mammon’s with Avarice are self-evident; others are less so, like Asmodeus’ with Lechery or Belphegor’s with Sloth. The devil he aligned with Envy was Leviathan (Hume and Drury 2013: 105). It is, of course, unlikely that Hobbes was aware of this more esoteric sense of the term when

between 1642 and 1651 he chose it to refer to his vision of the political state. Kim Ian Parker analyses Hobbes' use of this 'dreadful name' as appropriate: the leviathan 'is an artificial being who represents the state because of its "stature and strength"...the unity of its members...and, importantly, its function as the "King of the Proud"' (2007: 430). The appellation is fitting: 'Nothing on earth is his equal' (Job 41:33). Yet as Isaiah makes clear, at time's end leviathan will meet one more than its equal: 'In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; and He will slay the reptile that is in the sea' (27:1).

While Hobbes's main reasoning may have come from Job, the eschatological intimation of Isaiah exerts influence. As argued in Chapter Two, the divine mimicry of the sovereign state was to extend to judgement day, when it would be superseded by the God it imitated. The state was a 'mortal god' serving beneath and in support of an 'immortal God' (Martinich 1992: 336) until the time when such viceregency would no longer be necessary and the terrestrial state could be effaced and replaced by a heavenly antitype for which it is both derivative and antecedent (Almond 2009: 49–50). For Derrida, Hobbes and other early theorists of sovereignty established the 'possibility of a Christian foundation of politics' based upon a (theo)logic of social covenant and theopolitical viceregency, of the human sovereign as lieutenant of the divine (2009: 52–3); a steward whose purpose was to replicate in the *saeculum* the functions of God as the sovereign guarantor of security and wellspring of meaning. The purpose of the leviathan-as-state was therefore to act out the will of the divine sovereign via a process of earthly imitation. I analysed this above, with regards to the earliest theories of political sovereignty in the writings of Bodin, for whom the sovereign prince was God's Lieutenant and 'earthly image' (1992: 46) and demonic witchcraft served as an act of 'divine and human treason' against Divine Majesty, the ultimate other that, as Satanic, was beyond the possibility of religious tolerance (1995: 200, 206).

The (Anti)Christic Imitation

Whether Hobbes knew the demonological meaning of 'leviathan' stemming from Binsfeld is almost impossible to discern—at least no clear chain of transmission

exists. Yet the relationship holds in an abstract sense. The boundary separating righteous imitation from counterfeit can be an unstable one, and in many ways, the dividing line is one constituted by envy. As Teresa Brennan argues in her critique of capitalism, *Exhausting Modernity*, ‘whether envy is a necessary corollary of imitation is questionable. Imitation can also be accompanied by envy’s opposite: admiration. We might say that imitation can be gauged envious where the original is denied’ (2000: 160). The theoretical transition of the leviathan from admiration—as in Bodin—to envy—as in the critiques of American society examined in Chapters Four through Six—is a complex one, passing through the mechanisms of Enlightenment secularisation and the rationalist critique that provoked mainline Christianity’s gradual marginalisation of demonology (Lincoln 2009: 45).

Yet as the Devil of Baudelaire’s ‘The Generous Gambler’ remarks, nobody was as interested in disproving superstition than he (1970: 62); the disappearance of demons from mainstream theological discourse led to their flourishing on the religious fringe and counter-cultural appropriation as a symbol of rebellion and liberty (Boss 1991; Faxneld 2014; Schock 2003). In being discredited the demon became polyvalent. Its relation to sovereignty also changed. It retained the symbolic legacy of early modern witchcraft in its relationship to decadent excess and the sexual-spiritual-political subversion of ‘proper’ order, but the legacy of a post-Miltonic appropriation of Satan as ‘archetypal embodiment of rebellion’ (Luijk 2013: 45) granted it a new relation to personal sovereignty and autonomy. Running from ‘Romantic Satanism’ via Bakunin and Blavatsky to the present, this paradigm reinscribes humanity’s Fall as a political or spiritual injunction of human freedom, gained via the acquisition of knowledge (Faxneld 2012, 2013a). Using ‘symbolic Satanism’ to challenge ‘God-given’ societal structures, this intellectual trajectory appropriated the very fears of absolutists like Bodin and Hobbes, translating them into an emancipatory politics. If the nature of evil in spiritual warfare is, as Graham Russell Smith asserted, wilful deviation from ‘God’s rule’ (2011: 346), then for the symbolic Satanists this rule was ‘analogous to that of the despotic and arbitrary authority [they] felt was ruling...in accordance with prescription and precedent’ (Faxneld 2013a: 530–1).

The journey of the demonic’s relationship to sovereignty does not, however, end with Satan’s ubiquitous invisibility. The writers examined in preceding chapters

occupy another transition in this genealogy. For them, the leviathan has gone rogue—in response, they orient themselves to the restoration of a once and future Kingdom, an orthotaxy for which the end is the one they anticipate and desire. Appleby notes that those we term fundamentalists are at root ‘*reactive* and *selective*’—two facets that reinforce and condition one another—and that they react (in part, if not in whole) to a perceived marginalisation of religion (2011: 230). That is, of ‘true’ religion, of ‘their’ religion. They react to the societies in which they live and those they perceive as leading it along its path toward perdition—‘nationalist political leaders, scientific and cultural elites...modern bureaucracies and institutions, and competing religious or ethnic groups that find public space under the banner of pluralism’ (*ibid.*). In trying to shift the leviathan back from envy towards admiration, they ‘are drawn to power and defined in large part by their attempt to acquire it’ (*ibid.*: 244). However, they are enmeshed in the processes, institutions, and practices of the structures they oppose. Indeed, they are constituted by them. Like the demons they fight, these holy warriors, spiritual and otherwise, are caught within the totality of a system they cannot escape. Thus, fearing the loss of the sacred, they appropriate the very structures seen to threaten it—‘sometimes awkwardly, sometimes shrewdly, but consistently erosive of [the] premodern “traditional” religious sensibilities’ they long to restore (*ibid.*).

For such reactionaries the nation has become demonic—even irredeemably so. But this does not mean that the demonic has achieved sovereignty, far from it. Rather, the locus of (true, legitimate) sovereignty has changed. It is not (just) the nation-state that serves as God’s lieutenant, as for Bodin and Hobbes, but the popular sovereign—specifically, the autonomous individual of modern (neo)liberalism, reified through the crucible of the Cold War, whose atomistic existence, severed from history and society, operates as the new ‘earthly image’ of Divine Majesty. As the locus of ‘true’ sovereignty shifts from profaned state to imago-bearing believer, society becomes increasingly seen as demonic—not only the secularised society of the Western nation-state but (also) the general concept of ‘society’ as that which surrounds the sovereign self, contravening its indivisibility by mechanisms of history, culture, and materiality.

Selfhood (In)Divisible

In *American Possessions*, Sean McCloud argues that contemporary ‘Third Wave’ spiritual warfare discourses are inextricably tied to the cultural logic of neoliberalism, creating a framework where the ‘free-willed, autonomous individual...completely unfettered by its history and social locations’ (2015: 107) is opposed to demonic forces that represent precisely those things—‘history, materiality, and the social’ (*ibid.*: 113). For McCloud, Third Wave evangelicalism is characterised by a logic of possession, commercial and spiritual. As previously noted, demons are territorial, haunting objects, bodies, places and nations from which they must be removed. They are attracted by and gain access via sins, present and historic. Such sins, which run from physical or emotional abuse to murder to loving attachment to heirlooms or childhood toys, open spaces for demonic habitation, creating ‘spatial limbos’ in which ‘the sins of history materialize in the form of demons’ (*ibid.*: 21, 51).

Yet while they attempt to wrestle with problems of historical violence and social structures, spiritual warfare discourses eschew structural critique in favour of a neoliberalistic individualisation of problems: ‘social sources, institutions, and forces that might be implicated in misfortune and injustice are ignored’ in favour of a literal demonization of such issues—‘the Third Wave imaginary conjures demons—summoned by the sins of individuals or groups—to explain social problems’ (*ibid.*: 62). These demons are bound to familial ties and traumatic events, and must be healed by therapeutic exorcisms which are personal rather than societal—financial hardship, material deprivation and chronic sickness, for example, are caused by ‘generational curses’ rather than social inequality or similar structural issues (*ibid.*: 82). Spiritual warfare wrestles with the past while in many ways disavowing it—history and society haunt the person, but the solution is a personal journey of repentance rather than any systemic change. Similarly, it is the individual who sins, even if they are compelled to do so by (demonically inspired) biological drives or inherited legacies. By simultaneously encoding both a rhetoric of individual choice and one of demonic drives and the pervading forces of history and familial legacy, McCloud argues, such ideologies construct ‘theologies of desire and action’ which fit broader thematic patterns in contemporary American discourses as vacillating between ‘autonomous

free-will individualism and external compulsion.’ In these discourses, the demonic is representative of a ‘return of the repressed, in that the forces ignored and denied in the neoliberal imaginary reappear, demanding recognition that they continue to possess the late-modern human agent’ (*ibid.*: 95).

Although McCloud does not focus on apocalyptic conspiracies, they might be considered a quintessential form of the logic operating here, in which society becomes figured as intrinsically demonic in opposition to the sovereignty of the individual. This logic has been at work in all three of the case studies examined in this thesis, albeit in different ways. The figurations of ‘Jezebel’ examined in Chapter Five are the closest to those analysed by McCloud, in which the individual and ‘natural family’ (and Church as spiritual family, naturalised by proxy) are opposed to demonic societal structures (media, globalisation, civil rights, etc.) that threaten to undermine their unity.¹ Figurations of ‘Islam’ built on this model as a construction of a projection of demoniac unity—this ‘Islam’ infiltrates the spaces in American authenticity left by ‘Jezebel’. This figuration operated on two levels, juxtaposing both American national integrity to the competing unity of a coming Caliphate and that of the autonomous citizen against the totalitarian legalism of ‘*shari’a*’, seen as effacing individuality and freedom: an apocalyptic literalisation of US legal scholar Grant Gilmore’s adage that ‘In Hell there will be nothing but law’ (2014: 99). In the transhumanistic conspiracies of Thomas Horn and his associates, the apocalypse ends in the literal erasure of the sovereign self as the *imago Dei* is replaced by a diabolic simulacrum—the sovereign abdicates, shedding the (divine) source of its autonomy in order to become radically other, for which—to quote Horn quoting C.S. Lewis—‘far from being the heirs of power, will be of all men most subject to the dead hand of the great planners and conditioners and will themselves exercise least power upon the future’ (2011a: 8). Deviations from an orthotaxy conceptualised as the essential ground of ‘true’ (that is, Christian, capitalist, heteronormative) identity is conceived as forfeiture of the future. As forces of darkness without light—without a God, who is light—these competing

¹ Jezebel herself appears once in McCloud’s work in the context of Alice Patterson, a Third Wave figure who gained notoriety for her involvement in Rick Perry’s 2011 ‘prayer rally’, designed to garner support for his (ultimately failed) candidacy for the 2012 Republican presidential nomination. In her 2010 work *Bridging the Racial and Political Divide*, Patterson identifies Jezebel as the demonic force operating through the Democratic Party due to its support of slavery in the 1800s, affirmation of abortion rights and current support for ‘sexual perversions’ (LGBT civil rights) (McCloud 2015: 32–3).

systems of being are seen as lacking not just a right to the territory of the future, but as being structurally incapable of possessing it.

Whereas for theorists of sovereignty like Bodin witchcraft undermined God's majesty and thus constituted a form of demoniac treason against the conceptual integrity of a social order founded upon it, in contemporary spiritual warfare and other conspiracist discourses it is that very social order that has become demonic—but demonic in opposition to the integrity of the sovereign individual as new bearer of God's earthly image. As demons of the absolutist state manifested in the rogue subjectivities of 'witches' who through their irreligiosity denied the indivisible authority of the sovereign, demons of the autonomous individual manifest in the forces of a society beyond his (or her, although the formulation of this subject is peculiarly masculine) subjectivity: history (personal, familial, national), culture, 'artificial' social structures (civil rights, social security), etcetera. Sovereign God segues into sovereign monarch and monological state that segues into sovereign individual—although such a succession is itself a repetition that alters the very ipseity that supposedly grounds sovereignty as indivisible. Each time its demons emerge in the faults lacing its illusory indivisibility. The demonic thereby acts to expose the contradictions in the sovereign's construction of intrinsic unity, and thus must be excluded from it. It is the very mechanisms of this exclusion which reveal the sovereign's dependency on—its constitution by and through—its demonic other.

Popular Sovereignty and its Demons

In the discourses examined in Chapters Four through Six, two interwoven oppositions between sovereignty and the demonic become apparent: the demonic as other to the sovereign individual, and the demonic as other to the sovereign nation-state, though in reality these are closer to refractions of the same discourse than distinct phenomena, reliant as they are upon an always-unstable construction of the authentic America(n). Constructions of an authentic American citizen condition and are conditioned by the construction of an authentic America broadly—of an orthotaxic configuration of the nation and what it is believed to represent. Entwined in the theologic of civil religion, this construction often hinges on ideas of the 'popular sovereign'—the hypostasised construct of 'We, the People' as democratic, sovereign author of America.

The theorist of sovereignty Paul Kahn has posited the notion of the ‘popular sovereign’ as trans-generational collective subject of America’s political imaginary, constituting the ground of the American self-construction of its identity (2007, 2011, 2012, 2014). This idea of the popular sovereign is, for Kahn, bound to ideas of the (American) Revolution and the Constitution it produced, figured as the relationship of sovereignty to law: ‘Revolution is the moment of sovereign presence; law is the remnant of a now withdrawn sovereign’ (2014: 353). I touched on Kahn briefly in Chapter Three, and it is time to consider his theorisation in more depth. For Kahn, when American law is enacted it is enacted in the name of the popular sovereign, of the imagined community of ‘We the People’ inaugurated by the Revolution. Thus, when something is declared ‘unconstitutional’, he argues, the declarer invokes the popular sovereign as transtemporal, omnipresent author of America: things deemed ‘unconstitutional’ are things that go against the will of the sovereign (people) (2011: 9–10; 2012: 35). Going further, Kahn links American exceptionalism to the Schmittian exception as defining characteristic of sovereignty: the exception—the (idea of the) Revolution—is viewed as the fundamental ground of American identity, one which returns repeatedly in the mechanisms of civil religion; as such, in a sense ‘the entirety of American political experience is lived within the exception—or at least within the shadow of the exception’ (2011: 11).

Kahn argues that one of the constitutive elements of this exceptional sovereignty is the readiness with which America identifies enemies and figures the struggle against such enemies through a language of sacrifice—sacrifice, for Kahn, grounds political order by substituting the chaotic and ‘meaningless’ violence of the state of nature and reconfiguring death as a sublime sacrifice for (political) order. Citizens sacrifice themselves for the idea of political community, of the popular sovereign, against the image of an enemy that threatens it:

Americans continue to imagine a world in which there are potential enemies and thus one in which politics can turn to life-threatening violence...the world’s most powerful nation lives with a belief in the insecurity of its own existence...The identification of the enemy is not grounded in a difference in policy but rather in the perception of an existential threat (*ibid.*: 10–11).

There are issues with Kahn’s thesis. Setting aside criticisms of its applicability as a broader theory of sovereignty and the constitution of the political imaginary

(Barshack 2012; Bassok 2012; Stevens 2013), it often seems to rests on essentialist and homogenising foundations that appeal to a universal experience of US political and national identification. Kahn purports to offer not a prescriptive but a descriptive account of the political imaginary, but links this descriptive account to the Revolution with little attempt to wrestle with ways in which the current construction of popular sovereignty might be at least partially a product of more recent social discourses like neoliberalism or Cold War geopolitics. As Jason Stevens notes, it is unlikely that the American political imaginary is quite as ‘hegemonic or perennial’ as Kahn claims (2011a: n.p.). Stevens has critiqued Kahn for his selective appropriation of history, noting that while traditions of political and religious dissent were tied to appeals to divine authority against the perceived illegitimacy of existing structures, Kahn reinscribes these moments as instantiations of transtemporal sovereign presence to support his thesis that ‘the trans-temporal, collective subject of the revolutionary sovereign, instantiated in every citizen, is a secularization of the mystical body of Christ, which the Protestant Reformation...had already transferred from the king and the sacraments to the inwardness of believers contemplating the scripture’ (2011b: n.p.). Kahn argues that it is impossible to understand American politics without taking into account its own self-imagining via civil religion (2011: 12; 2014: 354–5) but we might ask whose self-imagining this might be. By his own admission, the stable figuration of ‘We, the People’ necessitates the creation of enemies, enemies that are both threats to its unity and the mechanism by which that unity is discursively maintained. As I have shown throughout this thesis, sovereignty’s demonic other is as often located internally to the kingdom as it is externally.

Despite or perhaps because of its essentialist and homogenising underpinnings Kahn’s thesis is useful for illuminating the mechanisms of the (neo)conservative ‘evangelical-capitalist resonance machine’ (Connolly 2008) I explored above, particularly in the context of spiritual warfare and other political apocalypticisms. Essentialist constructions of sovereign presence instantiated through the processes of civil religion are exceptionally strong in these discourses. As I have shown, the identification of an enemy is foundational to them despite differences in this enemy’s identity. ‘We, the People’ necessitates ‘They, (not) the People.’ The legitimacy of (a certain construction of) the ‘popular sovereign’ is opposed to a plurality of competing

identities, and while ‘Islam’, ‘Jezebel’, and ‘Transhumanism’ address disparate permutations of a fear of the failure of a once and future kingdom, they all address this fear. Kahn links sovereignty to a volitional decision for exception, which he sees as theologically manifested in the miracle: ‘theology begins only with faith in the miraculous: the sovereign decision for creation. The miracle is the exception’ (2011: 32–3). He holds that belief in this miracle of exception is what makes America resistant, even hostile, to the strictures of international law, and to images of the post-sovereign EU described by neoconservative Robert Kagan (2004), a perhaps-idealised image of Europe that Kahn utilises on occasion (2011: 11, 16, 55, 141; 2012: 35). This hostility is more noticeable in the figurations of ‘Islam’ I analysed in Chapter Four, which reduce Islam to *shari’a* envisioned as totalitarian legalism. This apparent erasure of an authentic subject capable of autonomous action is present in the other case studies also, from its literal erasure in demoniac transhumanism to its steady erosion by globalisation and sexual-spiritual fluidity in figurations of Jezebel. In all, the sovereign individual, and a popular sovereign that is the collective embodiment of that sovereignty, is opposed to a demonic other seen as trying to erode its legitimacy, authenticity, and, ultimately, its Being.

This demonic other is often figured as America, or more accurately as having co-opted America, diverting it from its original purity for a demoniac purpose. In such constructions, America is reconfigured as having become unconstitutional: while many (if not all) demonic threats originate beyond it, they have already transfigured the contours of the society they have penetrated, granted access by a weakening of the structures of truth and authenticity and further eroding them via the proliferation of alternative ways of thinking, being, and believing. Shaped and reshaped by the mechanisms of the evangelical-capitalist resonance machine, the popular sovereign opposes the rogue leviathan of a diabolised society. For the writers examined in this thesis, America has betrayed its ‘authentic’ core and must therefore be reconstituted in accordance with the sovereign act that birthed it by those who bear the sovereign’s image—that is, by ‘We, the People’. If—as Kahn believes—the quintessence of the sovereign is the ‘act of creation’, then the demonic’s inability to create is inextricably tied to its incapacity for sovereignty. The miraculous intervention of the popular sovereign—which is to say the ‘authentic’ and ‘legitimate’ orthotaxic construction of

‘We, the People’, the ‘real’ people who are not those other people—is required to slay the rogue leviathan, whose deviation from orthotaxy annuls its right to any future.

However, the reassertion of this sovereignty is tied to a structure of repetition, transfiguring it into a spectral counterfeit that haunts attempts at the advent of any sovereign presence premised on a monologic of ipseity.

A DEVIL IS HAUNTING HEAVEN: IPSEITY, ITERABILITY, IRRUPTION

In Alfred de Vigny’s 1824 poem *Éloa*, the angels inform the titular heroine of the one who fell. They describe both his original glory, as the most beautiful and radiant of angels, who carried God’s love to all places, and his current wretchedness, lost and alone, unable to speak the tongue of Heaven anymore. They conclude their narrative by stating the potency of his absence: ‘*Le ciel qu’il habita se trouble à sa mémoire, Nul Ange n’osera vous conter son histoire, Aucun Saint n’oserait dire une fois son nom*’ (1834: 67–8).² Heaven is troubled by his memory; no angel dares recount his (hi)story, nor any saint speak his name. While invoked as a cautionary tale for the naïve Éloa that any angel might fall, the narrative indicates something broader than merely the role the Devil plays in that of the poem. Satan’s absence haunts Heaven. It presents as a void about which no one speaks but around which everything revolves. There is an absence in Heaven that threatens the possibility of return, or perhaps just of descent. It marks an alterity, a possibility of reversal or reversion—of what might be construed as the heterology or heterotaxy that orthotaxy is constituted by.

The Hauntological Demonic

Derrida’s notion of ‘hauntology’ is useful in understanding the relationship of the demon to the orthotaxy it infiltrates and enframes. A Francophone play on ‘ontology’, hauntology referred in *Specters of Marx* to the way in which the spectre of Marx, and communism generally, occupied the disavowed foundations of capitalism’s post-Cold War triumphalism. Derrida (1994: 64–5) writes:

² ‘Heaven, where he lived, is troubled by his memory, No Angel will dare recount his story, No Saint would dare to speak his name again’ (my translation).

this triumphant conjuration [of capitalist hegemony] is striving in truth to disavow, and therefore to hide from, the fact that never, never in history, has the horizon of the thing whose survival is being celebrated (namely, all the old models of the capitalist and liberal world) been as dark, threatening, and threatened. And never more 'historic,' by which we mean inscribed in an absolutely novel moment of a process that is nonetheless subject to a law of iterability.

The triumph was always-already haunted by something that threatened to return; the 'end of history' was never more historical than at the moment of its declaration. Nicole Anderson argues that, for Derrida, hauntology 'makes impossible and possible a metaphysics of ontology that structures inheritance along linear coordinates in time and space, cause and effect, which in turn (in)forms the presence of the subject', that is, 'the haunting of non-being within being, absence within presence, outside within inside, and vice versa' (2012: 91, 99).

The demonic sketches out a hauntological relationship to the order it opposes. Forbidden the creative sovereign act—the miracle, the revolution—it occupies the space where sovereign presence has receded, appropriates its tools, and infiltrates the fractures in its unity. As its own disavowed *ontos*, the demonic haunts sovereignty and the linear structures of inheritance and ownership it is constructed as guaranteeing. The exact form this takes differs with the transfiguration of the sovereign and so with the specific conjuration of its demons. For Bodin, but also for Landon Schott and Jennifer LeClaire and the others who write on the nefarious impact of Jezebel, it comes in the form of a demonic witchcraft that distorts the gendered social order founded on an indivisible, masculine majesty. The normative hierarchy of gender thereby forms the bedrock of orthotaxy as such. As Rebecca Wilkin remarks of Bodin's *Demon-Mania*, 'Rule by women leads to the annihilation of the state, while women's knowledge of the occult heralds the decadence of the moral universe' (2008: 74–5). This foundational distortion of heteronormativity works in several ways as the ground for other distortions: the totalitarian ipseity of 'Islam' infiltrates via the cracks Jezebel leaves in orthotaxy's walls, while it is debates about what is 'natural' or 'proper' to 'human nature' that lead to 'Transhumanism's' questioning of the naturalness of 'the human' itself.

These are not identical to fears of Jezebel, however. While Jezebel figured an erosion of the normative by fluidity and disruption these other others in many ways

are figured as constructing competing normativities. ‘Islam’ figures an uncanny self, an orthotaxy so (un)like the one authors like Richardson covet: Kingdom Come not as Christendom but Caliphate. This uncanniness reconfigures historic demonisations of competing monotheisms, not solely Islam but Judaism as well, and Cold War fears of totalitarianism and of a One World Order for which the One World is no longer theirs: an-Other(‘s) globalisation. ‘Jezebel’ weakens structures of orthotaxy, whereas ‘Islam’ threatens to usurp them. Meanwhile, ‘Transhumanism’ makes the structures of orthotaxy itself always-already other. By reconfiguring the serpent’s gift of the *saeculum* as the totality of existence, it figures an oppositional position to ‘Islam’: the latter creates a world in which there is nothing but law, the former one in which there is no law—or more specifically no (longer a) sovereign as transcendent, stable, and indivisible ground of meaning which creates the law and subsequently recedes, leaving us with the shadow of its image and promise of its return. The sovereign annuls itself (sovereignly): the semblance is reconfigured as an idol, and reality (p)redestined into only immanence. Responding to these constructions of the other, proponents of orthotaxy wage—to again appropriate and transfigure Arshin Adib-Moghaddam’s summation of the ideological structures of al-Qaeda—‘total war’, both spiritual and political, against external and internal others, ‘in order to create a true and absolute genealogy; a mythical tale dotted with heroic figures and “authenticated” personalities that would deliver [America] from [its] “imperfect” existence, from [its] fallen present’ (2006: 252).

That Which Comes (Once, Once Again)

The void left at the heart of Heaven marks the trace of dissent, and promises a return. This phantasmatic return is crucial. It conditions both orthotaxy and its categorisation of its others, rendering them intelligible and legible, (re)inscribable. According to the logic of prophetic time on which many authors analysed in this thesis rely, everything new is old. Civil rights and gender politics are the return of a Jezebel spirit, Islamism a repetition of the perpetual enmity between gentiles and Jews—and the Christians who are their successors and erstwhile defenders—while transhumanism is merely the resurgence of the ‘religion of man’, that travels unchanged from Babel via Gnosticism to the Enlightenment and beyond. These demons are hauntological as communism

was to the liberal capitalist order that ostensibly vanquished it—they are defeated yet threaten to return, troubling theopolitical and eschatological narratives of orthotaxic triumph and unbroken inheritance, problematising its sovereign claim to the territory of the future. The authors analysed in this thesis wait for a second coming—of Christ, America, the popular sovereign; that is, of orthotaxy—but the advent they receive is not the one they anticipated. What returns is not the unitary and unifying power of the Sovereign but the spectre of its thought-defeated Adversary.

Writing about the “‘diabolical’ crisis’ in Europe in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Michel de Certeau posited the demonic as one face of an other that infiltrates and accelerates the mutation of the society in which it irrupts. Whether the irruption signals something truly new or the return of something ancient is, for de Certeau, impossible for the historian to truly know: its alterity is provided with ‘forms of expression prepared in advance’, yet these forms cannot fully contain this alterity (or perhaps its excess is an attribute of the figure it adopts) (2000: 1). Irrespective of whether it is old or new or—as the demon is ‘the sphinx of a truth mixed with lies’ (*ibid.*: 148)—some irreducible hybrid of both, its irruption provokes a discourse of social anxiety that rejects ‘both the limits of a present and the real condition of its future’ (*ibid.*: 1).

De Certeau held this diabolical visage was a product of a religious society—‘In societies that either are not, or have ceased to be, religious, they assume other faces’—and that it marked

fault lines within a religious civilization, perhaps the last that could be expressed by means of the religious apparatus—the last rifts before a new beginning. They appear to signal an end that cannot yet be spoken—hence their eschatological character. They also betray an uncertainty before the future, the very expression of which becomes an object of panic and repression. (*ibid.*: 2).

The significance of this “‘diabolical’ crisis’ for de Certeau was that it signalled the confrontation in a society between destabilised old certainties and emerging forms of knowledge and being (*ibid.*). The demonic irruption figured a discursive hybridisation that encoded both the uncertainties of crumbling ideologies and those of ideologies still becoming stable. And while ‘a crisis’ sufficed ‘for them to rise up’ from beneath the quotidian permutations of the political and social imaginary, this other always circulates, unseen (*ibid.*: 1). Thus, while the demonic is most visible in times of crisis

when the logic of orthotaxy is most overtly threatened, they are not the sole locus of its manifestation. The demonic is constant and relentless in its oppositions, even and perhaps especially when invisible. While de Certeau is discussing a general structure of the irruption of alterity—one which here, if not always, adopts diabolic semblance—his observations are useful for figuring the demonic's relation to sovereign orders broadly. There were (historic, ideological) reasons this other adopted diabolic form. There are similar reasons in modern America.

McCloud invokes de Certeau's analysis in his exploration of demonological discourses in Third Wave evangelicalism, noting especially how such evangelicals are hybridised with the very cultural forms they oppose (2015: 88):

Satan's tools for world domination surround them on all sides: other people's religions, multiculturalism, liberal politics, and many forms of popular culture. On the other hand, some of the Third Wave's political and cultural dispositions—the promotion of laissez-faire forms of capitalism as 'biblical,' theological attacks on what little is left of the welfare state, and the utilization of therapeutic discourse—seem to embrace some of the most dominant themes of the era. The Third Wave both complements and contests some dominant contemporary notions of agency, structure, history, and conceptions of the individual...the battles with demons described in deliverance manuals register the movement's attraction and repulsion toward the late-modern social formation from which it was born.

For McCloud, the demonological discourse in contemporary America serves much the same purpose as it does in de Certeau's historiography: a ritualised performance of cultural contestation. McCloud does not, however, look at broader philosophical quandaries of the other or the theopolitical genealogy of demonology's relationship to what I have termed orthotaxy: constructions of sovereign, telic order (social, political, religious) that must be reinforced and reinscribed. He sees how the Third Wave imaginary is hopelessly entwined in the coils of the very leviathan it wishes to slay but not how the demonic's destabilisation of the certainties of sovereign order is inextricable from the theologico-political notion of sovereignty itself. The relationship figured between spiritual warfare and the society it disavows is just an iteration of a genealogical relationship that returns and mutates according to the alterations of sovereignty itself, as it divides itself via the mechanisms of translating its discursive prescriptions of indivisibility.

Sovereignty and its demonologies transform throughout their genealogy. It is not just the demonic that persists in its insolence, running its head against the fates,

but also the sovereignty from which it is inseparable. This relates to the structure of what Derrida termed iterability, and specifically iterability's relationship to ipseity. For Derrida, as I discussed in Chapter Two, sovereignty rests upon ipseity: 'Before any sovereignty of the state, of the nation-state, of the monarch, or, in democracy, of the people, ipseity names a principle of legitimate sovereignty, the accredited or recognised supremacy of a power or a force' (2004: 11–12). It marks the principle of the self-same—the recognition of those like oneself—and so the power, authority and proprietary possession that comes with the codification of that one-self. This principle is reflected throughout this thesis: orthotaxies are posited on the basis of an indivisible logic of identity and reified through exclusionary demonologies. This ipseity, however, is made (im)possible by its iterability—its need for reinscription that renders it always-already other to its-self. Iterability refers to the necessary condition of the singular event that requires a repetition that makes it always other to itself—as the signature as hallmark of identity only achieves this hallmark on the basis that it can be reinscribed at another time or place. Because of this logic, iterability inscribes itself as the condition of the origin: it is only by later (re)inscription that a moment of origin acquires authenticity and identity. 'Iterability makes it so that the origin must repeat itself originally, must alter itself to count *as origin*, that is to say, to preserve itself' (2002a: 277–8). Joseph Kronick summarises iterability as an 'alterity of repetition' predicated on a 'suppression of difference that makes identity possible and impossible in any absolute sense'—an 'originary violence, a violence necessary to the constitution, or institution, of any transcendental or natural category' (1999: 38).

In the relationship of sovereign orthotaxy to its demonic other, this 'alterity of repetition' is visible in two different but interconnected patterns. First and most obvious is the way theopolitical sovereignty itself has repeated across its genealogy, passing from God to king to state to citizen. In each of these it ostensibly repeats the same structure, grounding an (in)divisibility of power and authenticity that grounds the theopolitical order, but it is irreducibly altered with each transition. The leviathan always-already encoded a relationship of envy; its imitation compromised the integral indivisible unity of the thing it imitated (the sovereign god) by the very positing of its imitability. This first structure of sovereignty's iterability, which makes the leviathan rogue *a priori*, feeds into a second manifestations of repetition and othering: the

demonic counterfeit itself. Manifesting as counter-claims to sovereign orthotaxy's ownership of the future, this counterfeit of orthotaxy sketches alternative orders: 'Jezebel', 'Islam', 'Transhumanism'—figurations of other systems, structures, and ways of being that orthotaxy continually denies legitimacy to and (it claims) continually defeats, but which nonetheless return to haunt it.

The Counterfeit Gods

Sovereignty's demonic other encodes its iterability, gesturing to a crisis of prophetic eschatology broadly. The prophetic eschatology performed by the authors analysed in this thesis is bound to a politicisation of typology, the model of exegesis in which past events become a figure of future ones, as Jerusalem's temple (pre)figures the New Jerusalem in which God's presence will be constant and eternal and Adam prefigures Christ. Typology entails a repetition of past events which gives them their 'true meaning', a state that endures until an *eschaton* 'when repetition is no longer' (Agamben 2005b: 77). However, through its reliance on this structure, the politics of prophetic time become inextricable from a broader logic of iterability—each event reinscribes a past event and prefigures a future one, overtly different yet essentially identical. However, in the texts explored in this thesis, it is not only the redemptive events that return—as in traditional typology (Greidanus 1999: 242), but also their others. Each demonic irruption is the repetition of something that preceded it and was thwarted—Queen Jezebel, the gentile nations, the *nephilim*. But each iteration of the demonic other posits a counter-claim to orthotaxy's own (re)iteration of its ownership, reiterating the dissent that inaugurated the fall. Such counter-claims are seen as counterfeits by and of the orthotaxy they oppose, but what truly separates a counterfeit from its original?

Derrida challenges a distinction between original and simulacrum generally by the theorised structure of iterability, but addresses the distinction directly in relation to the counterfeit as part of a discussion on the (im)possibility of the gift in *Given Time*. A counterfeit, Derrida posits, is not merely something which is false but a falsity able to masquerade convincingly as a truth, something which destabilises discourse about 'truth' since one cannot be certain if one is dealing with a truth or just its simulacrum (1992: 170). O'Connor elaborates that 'ideas of authenticity and inauthenticity are

founded on the notion that there is an original which belongs to an order that is sacred and inviolable. The inauthentic is a copy which is only a pale imitation of the true.’ But, he explains, for Derrida ‘there is no original exempt from subjection to further demarcations and delimitations’—nothing is purely ‘original’ or counterfeit, since to an extent they need one another: ‘for a counterfeit to be a counterfeit requires imitation of an “original”’ (2010: 88–9), but that original is only posited *as* origin retroactively. As such, there is, to an extent, only the simulacrum or simulacrum of the simulacrum, a phantasm which must be recognised ‘as having the power, at least the power and the possibility—without any controlling certitude, without any possible assurance—of producing, engendering, giving’ (Derrida 1992: 161).

Derrida concludes *Given Time* by positing that there ‘is no nature, only effects of nature: denaturation or naturalization. Nature, the meaning of nature, is reconstituted after the fact on the basis of a simulacrum...that it is thought to cause’ (*ibid.*: 170). I am tempted to say the same of sovereignty. If the earthly sovereign was constituted as an essential imitation of the heavenly, then—irrespective of envy or admiration—it was only ever a counterfeit god. The sovereign individual, lynchpin of the evangelical-capitalist resonance machine, would also be a counterfeit, even a counterfeit of a counterfeit. Even God, the (in)divisible origin of the structures of authenticity reified and reasserted through sovereignty’s history, is only projected back from the earthly inscription of his semblance and his will, from the signature of the unity that supposedly guarantees him but which compromises him from the start. The counterfeit becomes the origin it always-already was, and is counterfeited in turn. And so orthotaxy tries to return with the sameness it never was and cannot ever be. It segues into a semblance of its other, into a *pseudomonarchia* of demons for which the *pseudos* has lost all meaning. There were only (n)ever counterfeit gods, only (n)ever heterotaxies, and so there was and is no sovereignty, no ‘originary’ sovereignty whose indivisibility comes down to us in unbroken continuity or can be reclaimed through a process of restoration, only the effects (after- and fore-, destined and redestined, once and once again) of a political imaginary—paths toward or against illusions of (in)divisibility that compete and collude, reiterate and reinscribe each other on the basis of simulacra of simulacra.

But in the midst of this pandemonium, a question remains.

CODA

Owning the Future

Who owns the future? What does it mean to own sovereignly and without contestation this place, this property, named ‘the future’? When Irving Kristol argued, from the ideological depths of the Cold War, that this was ‘the key question’ of the era (1983: 256), he understood any answer would be contested territory. As Michael Williams writes, for the neoconservatives ‘ideology’ was ‘the ground upon which modern politics [was] fought’, and modernity is an epoch ‘in which all political programmes and positions must cast their arguments and conduct their struggles’ in terms of the ‘battle of ideas and the mutable direction of political culture’ (2007: 95).

Kristol’s question laid bare the stakes of the conflicts in which America was embroiled, domestically and internationally. He and his associates felt the necessity of (re)asserting those discursive structures they believed comprised the America they desired against those they despised. The spiritual warfare and related apocalyptic discourses I have analysed utilise a similar strategy, dividing the world into kingdoms of light and darkness, God and Satan, which vie for epistemic control. Predicated on a disavowal of the agential capacity and ‘property’ rights of the systems they oppose, they deny their adversaries a potential for creation that discursively robs them of systemic permanence premised on a logic of (re)production. This typological theopolitics is founded on a logic of sovereign ipseity, an indivisible monologic of the one-self that posits a single indivisible source of authenticity, ‘proper’ organisation of the social body, and teleological end to the historical process—three faces of what I have termed ‘orthotaxy’. This orthotaxy is, however, complicated and contested by

the demonologies it relies on and that constitute it, specifically on the demonologies' relationship to the sovereignty they deny and are denied.

FRAGILE CERTAINTIES

Michel de Certeau wrote that 'The need for certainty is also the admission of the fear of losing it' (2000: 113). The trinity of demonic others I explore in this thesis—'Jezebel', 'Islam', 'Transhumanism', three that are themselves multiple—each illustrate a different form of this unstated but ever-present admission. Each sketches out the framework of an alternative order that is denied on the basis of its alleged unsustainability—an unsustainability based not on analysis of the structural faults of the system in question, but posited *a priori* upon its deviation from the telic order of a history 'in which man and the cosmos progress under the guidance of God towards eternal salvation' (Barrois in Greidanus 1999: 255). Even in the discourses that exclude them, however, these heterotaxies operate through subtle contestations—structurally denied the ability to create, they infiltrate the fault lines in the structures they contest, revealing flaws or repurposing them for unintended ends. While this co-opting is coded as corruption, it can be considered part of the instability inaugurated by those structures' own iterability. Sovereignty was always more prescriptive than descriptive, and as it repeated and translated itself from context to context the illusion of its descriptiveness became harder to maintain and its prescriptiveness more open to contestation. The 'counterfeit orders' posited by spiritual warfare and apocalypticisms are, in many ways, simply refractions of its orthotaxic structures, structures that are themselves no less 'counterfeits' to an originary truth always constructed *a posteriori*.

When Kristol posed his 'key question' for the epoch, he knew the answer was not a foregone conclusion. But neoconservatives like Kristol also believed it would ultimately be answered. The Kirkpatrick Doctrine supported authoritarian regimes in order to forestall the immutable totality of the communist state, and Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history when it fell. However, the 'key question' of our epoch is perhaps best understood as a performative act of negation. It opens up the site of contestability. The ideological politics of inevitability was called into question by a

resurgence of political religion, most notably Islamism, in which ‘9/11’ marked the symbolic (if far from literal) reignition of history (Tibi 2014). While this clash can be seen as merely the reinscription of the clash of orthotaxies, it illustrates the always-precarious nature of any political *eschaton*. Indeed, the Global War on Terror maybe best revealed (and continues to reveal) the crisis of orthotaxy and persistent insolence of its demonic others. In Michael Drake’s summation, the war discursively emerged as ‘structurally unbounded, war without end, an infinite deferral of the model of absolute victory drawn from national military thought now redeployed in “pre-emptive defence” on a global scale against potential threats’. The deployment of such warfare paradigms produced similar effects mechanically as it did discursively, ‘collaterally [producing] new forces of revenge, resentment, solidarity and resistance which see the USA as their primary enemy’ (2007: 23).

While some held the war’s reification of its phantasmatic object (‘terror’) was a conceptual (not just tactical) error (*ibid.*: 20), I believe it to be one of the exemplars of the problematic of orthotaxy. Marc Redfield noted that in its designation of an absolute foe, ‘Its religious character is irreducible’ (2009: 56), and its apocalyptic character has been highlighted often (Buc 2015; McLaren 2003; Mills-Knutsen 2010; Northcott 2004). However, it is not (solely) its eschatological character but the infinite deferral of that eschatology that really defines it. It reifies an enemy (‘the terrorist’) and attempts to contain it in geographical and geopolitical territories it always exceeds (‘states that harbour...’), and thereby reveals the fissures in its political imaginary. In reasserting the supremacy of a particular nation over the others of not just *a* nation but of the concept of the nation itself, the War on Terror wages war on the realisation of its own (im)possible victory and against the terror of its own insecurity.

Orthotaxy constructs itself as immutable precisely because of its mutability, and stakes an uncontested claim to the territory of the future precisely because of its contestability. It holds itself omnipotent but its omnipotence is always-already broken and brokered from the beginning. It constructs demons as self-consolidating others but these others are also the tools of its own self-contestation, highlighting disavowed fractures in its ipseity: the porosity of its borders, contestability of its rulership, and evitability of its ends—among a legion of others figured in other texts at other times

and in other terms. Like the angel in the *Inferno*, orthotaxy speaks questions but does not await answers. But what might the demons respond, if permitted to speak and be heard? Maybe, since they are inextricable from processes of mimesis and repetition, they might reply with a question of their own. Maybe even the key question, a question that is key or the key—of a kingdom, heavenly or other. The most dangerous question for any angel, for even angels can be tempted to descent.

‘Who owns the future?’

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Following the 2015 British General Election, an election where all major parties built platforms on opposition to immigration and in which electorate opposition to politics-as-usual adopted nationalistic form, the US-centred concerns of this thesis reflect the patterns of demonisation sweeping Europe—Islamophobia and xenophobia, virulent and violent classism, an erosion of human liberty veiled in rhetoric of its celebration. This politics of fear often lacks the explicitly *theological* teleology of the discourses examined in this thesis but replaces it with a semblance, economic or *völkisch*, no less monological in conceptuality or terminal in orientation. It replicates theological structures in other fashions. Individuals are severed from a society in which they live, the darkness of which can be banished by the luminosity of privatisation. Borders are etched more indelibly. Sovereignty reasserts itself in processes predicated on a denial as internalised as externalised. It subsists by not questioning the illusion of its being.

The politics of demonology are so rich, under-examined and timely that there are many paths one might tread from here. Closer attention paid to the manifestation of such demonologies on the ground is perhaps the necessary complement to the more theoretical analysis I have conducted, addressing how the demonological structures of subjectivity, oppression and resistance operate in the individual lives of both believers in a system and those it excludes. The genealogy of sovereignty and its demonic other must also be interrogated further. While I sketch the main features of this genealogy, I have concentrated on it primarily in the context of a certain constellation of American evangelical Protestant conservatism, and the complexities and specificities of its

figuration must be explored in each historical milieu it arises in—although Philippe Buc (2015) and Per Faxneld (2014) go some way to addressing this. Similarly, it is necessary to explore its forms in other types of Christianity—American or other, evangelical or other—as well as in different but genealogically-Abrahamic religiosities.

These are practical directions that must be conducted with critical awareness of linguistic, historical and (in the present) ethnographic considerations. But there are also theologico-philosophical questions. Drawing on historic alignments of demons with fallen humanity, what becomes of this relationship when placed in the context of (post-)secular theory and analysed as symbolic of both humanity's highest aspirations for liberty and the abyssal excesses of that freedom? Simona Forti (2015) explores this partially through her paradigm of 'mediocre demons'; however, her emphasis on radical evil leads her to under-examine the demon's emancipatory appropriations. The personalisation of societal processes in conspiracisms (apocalyptic or otherwise) also bears examination, and has thus far been explored solely through the opposition between individuals and society (Fenster 2008), as a delegitimising paradigm that masks the operation of elites (deHaven-Smith 2013), or as the ascription of agency to accident (Aaronovitch 2011), but not as a potential individualisation of hegemony or discursive structures as viewed in Foucauldian terms. That is, that conspiracism might be a refraction of hegemony through a neoliberal ideological lens for which individual agency is the *sine qua non* of the political imaginary. Finally, it is crucial to explore how demonologies might mutate in political systems where sovereignty is disavowed, especially those attempting to move towards more legalistic paradigms. I suspect that, like Nietzsche's deceased God, sovereignty's shadow will linger beyond its presence, and post-sovereign paradigms will create new but no less exclusionary demonologies, based on other structures of normalisation and destination and their own arrangements of orthotaxy. But if so, then, with persistent insolence, its demons will continue to run their heads against the fates—once and once again.

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